

KEY TEXTS FROM PENTAGON'S VIETNAM STUDY

Following are the texts of key documents accompanying the Pentagon's study of the Vietnam war, covering events in the Truman and Eisenhower Administrations. Except where excerpting is specified, the documents appear verbatim, with only unmistakable typographical errors corrected.

Report of Ho's Appeals to U.S. In '46 to Support Independence

Cablegram from an American diplomat in Hanoi, identified as Landon, to State Department, Feb. 27, 1946, as provided in the body of the Pentagon study.

Ho Chi Minh handed me 2 letters addressed to President of USA, China, Russia, and Britain identical copies of which were stated to have been forwarded to other governments named. In 2 letters to Ho Chi Minh request ~~USA~~ as one of United Nations to support idea of Annamese independence according to Philippines example, to examine the case of the Annamese, and to take steps necessary to maintenance of world peace which is being endangered by French efforts to reconquer Indochina. He asserts that Annamese will fight until United Nations interferred in support of Annamese independence. The petition addressed to major United Nations contains:

A. Review of French relations with Japanese where French Indochina allegedly aided Japs:

B. Statement of establishment on 2

September 1945 of PENW Democratic Republic of Viet Minh:

C. Summary of French conquest of Cochin China began 23 Sept 1945 and still incomplete:

D. Outline of accomplishments of Annamese Government in Tonkin including popular elections, abolition of undesirable taxes, expansion of education and resumption as far as possible of normal economic activities:

E. Request to 4 powers: (1) to intervene and stop the war in Indochina in order to mediate fair settlement and (2) to bring the Indochinese issue before the United Nations organization. The petition ends with the statement that Annamese ask for full independence in fact and that in interim while awaiting UNO decision the Annamese will continue to fight the reestablishment of French imperialism. Letters and petition will be transmitted to Department soonest.

1952 Policy Statement by U.S. On Goals in Southeast Asia

Statement of Policy by the National Security Council, early 1952, on "United States Objectives and Courses of Action With Respect to Southeast Asia." According to a footnote, the document defined Southeast Asia as "the area embracing Burma, Thailand, Indochina, Malaya and Indonesia."

Objective

1. To prevent the countries of Southeast Asia from passing into the communist orbit, and to assist them to develop will and ability to resist communism from within and without and to contribute to the strengthening of the free world.

General Considerations

2. Communist domination of all Southeast Asia would

seriously endanger in the short term, and critically endanger in the longer term, United States security interests.

a. The loss of any of the countries of Southeast Asia to communist aggression would have critical psychological, political and economic consequences. In the absence of effective and timely counteraction, the loss of any single country would probably lead to relatively swift submission to or an alignment with communism of the remaining countries of the group. Particular alignment with communism of the rest of

Southeast Asia and India, and in the longer term, of the Middle East (with the probable exceptions of at least Pakistan and Turkey) would in all probability progressively follow. Such widespread alignment would endanger the stability and security of Europe.

b. Communist control of all of Southeast Asia would render the U.S. position in the Pacific offshore island chain precarious and would seriously jeopardize fundamental U.S. security interests in the Far East.

c. Southeast Asia, especially Malaya and Indonesia, is the principal world source of natural rubber and tin, and a producer of petroleum and other strategically important commodities. The rice exports of Burma and Thailand are critically important to Malaya, Ceylon and Hong Kong and are of considerable significance to Japan and India, all important areas of free Asia.

d. The loss of Southeast Asia, especially of Malaya and Indonesia, could result in such economic and political pressures in Japan as to make it extremely difficult to prevent Japan's eventual accommodation to communism.

3. It is therefore imperative that an overt attack on Southeast Asia by the Chinese Communists be vigorously opposed. In order to pursue the military courses of action envisaged in this paper to a favorable conclusion within a reasonable period, it will be necessary to divert military strength from other areas thus reducing our military capability in those areas, with the recognized increased risks involved therein, or to increase our military forces in being, or both.

4. The danger of an overt military attack against Southeast Asia is inherent in the existence of a hostile and aggressive Communist China, but such an attack is less probable than continued communist efforts to achieve domination through subversion. The primary threat to Southeast Asia accordingly arises from the possibility that the situation in Indochina may deteriorate as a result of the weakening of the resolve of, or as a result of the inability of the governments of France and of the Associated States to continue to oppose the Viet Minh rebellion, the military strength of which is being steadily increased by virtue of aid furnished by the Chinese Communist regime and its allies.

5. The successful defense of Tonkin is critical to the retention in non-Communist hands of mainland Southeast Asia. However, should Burma come under communist domination, a communist militarily indefensible. The execution of

the following U.S. courses of action with respect to individual countries of the area may vary depending upon the route of communist advance into Southeast Asia.

6. Actions designed to achieve our objectives in Southeast Asia require sensitive selection and application, on the one hand to assure the optimum efficiency through coordination of measures for the general area, and on the other, to accommodate to the greatest practicable extent to the individual sensibilities of the several governments, social classes and minorities of the area.

Courses of Action

SOUTHEAST ASIA

7. With respect to Southeast Asia, the United States should:

a. Strengthen propaganda and cultural activities, as appropriate, in relation to the area to foster increased alignment of the people with the free world.

b. Continue, as appropriate, programs of economic and technical assistance designed to strengthen the indigenous non-communist governments of the area.

c. Encourage the countries of Southeast Asia to restore and expand their commerce with each other and with the rest of the free world, and stimulate the flow of the raw material resources of the area to the free world.

d. Seek agreement with other nations, including at least France, the UK, Australia and New Zealand, for a joint warning to Communist China regarding the grave consequences of Chinese aggression against Southeast Asia, the issuance of such a warning to be contingent upon the prior agreement of France and the UK to participate in the courses of action set forth in paragraphs 10 c, 12, 14 f (1) and (2) and 15 c (1) and (2), and such others as are determined as a result of prior trilateral consultation, in the event such a warning is ignored.

e. Seek UK and French agreement in principle that a naval blockade of Communist China should be included in the minimum courses of action set forth in paragraph 10c below.

f. Continue to encourage and support closer cooperation among the countries of Southeast Asia, and between those countries and the United States, Great Britain, France, the Philippines, Australia, New Zealand, South Asia and Japan.

g. Strengthen, as appropriate, covert operations designed to assist in the achievement of U.S. objectives in Southeast Asia.

h. Continue activities and operations designed to encourage the overseas Chinese communities in Southeast Asia to organize and activate anti-communist groups and activities within their own communities, to resist the effects of parallel pro-communist groups and activities and, generally, to increase their orientation toward the free world.

i. Take measures to promote the coordinated defense of the area, and encourage and support the spirit of resistance among the peoples of Southeast Asia to Chinese Communist aggression and to the encroachment of the communists.

Make clear to the American people the importance of Southeast Asia to the security of the United States so that they may be prepared for any of the courses of action proposed herein.

INDOCHINA

8. With respect to Indochina the United States should:

a. Continue to promote international support for the three Associated States.

b. Continue to assure the French that the U.S. regards the French effort in Indochina as one of great strategic importance in the general international interest rather than in the purely French interest, and as essential to the security of the free world, not only in the Far East but in the Middle East and Europe as well.

c. Continue to assure the French that we are cognizant of the sacrifices entailed for France in carrying out her effort in Indochina and that, without overlooking the principle that France has the primary responsibility in Indochina, we will recommend to the Congress appropriate military, economic and financial aid to France and the Associated States.

d. Continue to cultivate friendly and increasingly cooperative relations with the Governments of France and the Associated States at all levels with a view to maintaining and, if possible, increasing the degree of influence the U.S. can bring to bear on the policies and actions of the French and Indochinese authorities to the end of directing the course of events toward the objectives we seek. Our influence with the French and Associated States should be designed to further those constructive political, economic and social measures which will tend to increase the stability of the Associated States and thus make it possible for the French to reduce the degree of their participation in the military, economic and political affairs of the Associated States.

e. Specifically we should use our influence with France and the Associated States to promote positive political, military, economic and social policies, among which the following are considered essential elements:

(1) Continued recognition and carrying out by France of its primary responsibility for the defense of Indochina.

(2) Further steps by France and the Associated States toward the evolutionary development of the Associated States.

(3) Such reorganization of French administration and representation in Indochina as will be conducive to an increased feeling of responsibility on the part of the Associated States.

(4) Intensive efforts to develop the armies of the Associated States, including independent logistical and administrative services.

(5) The development of more effective and stable Governments in the Associated States.

(6) Land reform, agrarian and industrial credit, sound rice marketing systems, labor development, foreign trade

and political, and psychological program to defeat or seriously reduce the Viet Minh forces.

(8) US-French cooperation in publicizing progressive developments in the foregoing policies in Indochina.

9. In the absence of large scale Chinese Communist intervention in Indochina, the United States should:

a. Provide increased aid on a high priority basis for the French Union forces without relieving French authorities of their basic military responsibility for the defense of the Associated States in order to:

(1) Assist in developing indigenous armed forces which will eventually be capable of maintaining internal security without assistance from French units.

(2) Assist the French Union forces to maintain progress in the restoration of internal security against the Viet Minh.

(3) Assist the forces of France and the Associated States to defend Indochina against Chinese Communist aggression.

b. In view of the immediate urgency of the situation, involving possible large-scale Chinese Communist intervention, and in order that the United States may be prepared to take whatever action may be appropriate in such circumstances, make the plans necessary to carry out the courses of action indicated in paragraph 10 below.

c. In the event that information and circumstances point to the conclusion that France is no longer prepared to carry the burden in Indochina, or if France presses for an increased sharing of the responsibility for Indochina, whether in the UN or directly with the U.S. Government, oppose a French withdrawal and consult with the French and British concerning further measures to be taken to safeguard the area from communist domination.

10. In the event that it is determined, in consultation with France, that Chinese Communist forces (including volunteers) have overtly intervened in the conflict in Indochina, or are covertly participating to such an extent as to jeopardize retention of the Tonkin Delta area by French Union forces, the United States should take the following measures to assist these forces in preventing the loss of Indochina, to repel the aggression and to restore peace and security in Indochina:

a. Support a request by France or the Associated States for immediate action by the United Nations which would include a UN resolution declaring that Communist China has committed an aggression, recommending that member states take whatever action may be necessary, without geographic limitation, to assist France and the Associated States in meeting the aggression.

b. Whether or not UN action is immediately forthcoming, seek the maximum possible international support for, and participation in, the minimum courses of military action agreed upon by the parties to the joint warning. These minimum courses of action are set forth in subparagraph c immediately below.

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Eisenhower Committee's Memo

On French Requests for Aid

c. Carry out the following minimum courses of military action, either under the auspices of the UN or in conjunction with France and the United Kingdom and any other friendly governments:

(1) A resolute defense of Indochina itself to which the United States would provide such air and naval assistance as might be practicable.

(2) Interdiction of Chinese Communist communication lines including those in China.

(3) The United States would expect to provide the major forces for task (2) above; but would expect the UK and France to provide at least token forces therefor and to render such other assistance as is normal between allies, and France to carry the burden of providing, in conjunction with the Associated States, the ground forces for the defense of Indochina.

11. In addition to the courses of action set forth in paragraph 10 above, the United States should take the following military actions as appropriate to the situation:

a. If agreement is reached pursuant to paragraph 7-c, establishment in conjunction with the UK and France of a naval blockade of Communist China.

b. Intensification of covert operations to aid anti-communist guerrilla forces operating against Communist China and to interfere with and disrupt Chinese Communist lines of communication and military supply-areas.

c. Utilization, as desirable and feasible, of anti-communist Chinese forces, including Chinese Nationalist forces in military operations in Southeast Asia, Korea, or China proper.

d. Assistance to the British to cover an evacuation from Hong Kong, if required.

e. Evacuation of French Union civil and military personnel from the Tonkin delta, if required.

12. If, subsequent to aggression against Indochina and execution of the minimum necessary courses of action listed in paragraph 10-c above, the United States determines jointly with the UK and France that expanded military action against Communist China is rendered necessary by the situation, the United States should take air and naval action in conjunction with at least France and the U.K. against all suitable military targets in China, avoiding insofar as practicable those targets in areas near the boundaries of the USSR in order not to increase the risk of direct Soviet involvement.

13. In the event the concurrence of the United Kingdom and France to expanded military action against Communist China is not obtained, the United States should consider taking unilateral action.

Excerpts from memorandum for the record, Jan. 30, 1954, by Brig. Gen. Charles H. Bonesteel 3d on meeting of President's Special Committee on Indochina.

1. The Special Committee met in Mr. Kyes' office at 3:30 p.m. 29 January 1954....

3. Admiral Radford said he had been in touch with General Ely, French Chief of Staff, through General Valluy. Ten B-26 aircraft are on the way to Indochina this week. These would contribute to filling the French request for aircraft to bring two B-26 squadrons up to a strength of 25 operational aircraft each. However, an additional 12 are needed to fill the full requirement because a total of 22 are needed (12 to fill the annual attrition plus 10 to fill the additional French request). There was some discussion on the seeming differences in requests reaching Washington via Paris and those coming through the MAAG. Subsequently in the meeting it was agreed that the French should be informed that the U.S. would act only on requests which had been approved by General O'Daniel after General O'Daniel was set up in Indochina.

4. Admiral Radford indicated that to fill the entire requirement for 22 B-26's on an urgent basis would mean taking some of them from U. S. operational squadrons in the Far East, but this could be done. The aircraft would not all have "zero" maintenance time on them.

5. As to the additional French request for 25 B-26's to equip a third squadron, it was decided that final decision to furnish them should await the return of General O'Daniel. However, the Air Force has been alerted that they may have to be furnished on short notice.

6. As to the provision of a small "dirigible," it was decided to inform the French that this could not be furnished.

7. Regarding the French request for 400 mechanics trained in maintenance of B-26 and C-47 aircraft, there was considerable discussion. Admiral Radford said he had informed General Ely, through General Valluy, that the U.S. does not believe the French have exhausted all efforts to get French civilian maintenance crews. He suggested the French try to find them through "Air France" Mr. Kyes mentioned the possibility of obtaining French personnel from their eight aircraft factories or from the big Chateauroux maintenance base where the U.S. employed French mechanics. General Smith inquired about the possibility of lowering French NATO commitments to enable transfer of French military mechanics. Admiral Radford said General Valluy had informed him the French Staff have carefully considered the idea but the French Air Force does not have enough military mechanics trained in B-26 or C-47 maintenance to fill the re-

chanics were being trained on these aircraft that the urgent requirement could not be met. He had also said that the employment of French civilian mechanics presented a difficult problem in security clearance.

8. General Smith recommended that the U.S. send 200 U.S. Air Force mechanics to MAAG, Indochina, and tell the French to provide the rest. Admiral Radford said this could be done and that the Air Force is, somewhat reluctantly, making plans to this end. He had let the French know that if American mechanics were sent they must be used only on air bases which were entirely secure from capture. General Smith wondered, in light of additional French requests, if the Committee should not consider sending the full 400 mechanics.

9. Mr. Kyes questioned if sending 200 military mechanics would not so commit the U.S. to support the French that we must be prepared eventually for complete intervention, including use of U.S. combat forces. General Smith said he did not think this would result—we were sending maintenance forces not ground forces. He felt, however, that the importance of winning in Indochina was so great that if worst came to the worst he personally would favor intervention with U.S. air and naval forces—not ground forces. Admiral Radford agreed. Mr. Kyes felt this consideration was so important that it should be put to the highest level. The President himself should decide. General Smith agreed. Mr. Allen Dulles wondered if our preoccupation with helping to win the battle at Dien Bien Phu was so great that we were not going to bargain with the French as we supplied their most urgent needs. Mr. Kyes said this was an aspect of the question he was resisting. Admiral Radford read from a cable just received from General O'Daniel, which indicated General Navarre had been most cordial to General O'Daniel at their meeting and had indicated he was pleased with the concept of U.S. liaison officers being assigned to his general headquarters and to the training command. General Navarre and General O'Daniel agreed to try to work out a maximum of collaboration at the military level.

10. Later in the meeting, Mr. Allen Dulles raised the question as to sending the CAP pilots the French had once requested. It was agreed that the French apparently wanted them now, that they should be sent, and CIA should arrange for the necessary negotiations with the French in Indochina to take care of it.

11. Mr. Kyes said that if we meet the French urgent demands they should be tied to two things: first, the achievement of maximum collaboration with the French in training and strategy, and

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secondly, the strengthening of General O'Daniel's hand in every way possible. General Smith agreed and felt we should reinforce General O'Daniel's position not only with the French in Indochina but also at the highest level in Paris. . . .

12. Summary of Action Agreed Regarding Urgent French Requests

It was agreed:

a. To provide 200 uniformed U.S. Air Force mechanics who would be assigned as an augmentation to MAAG, Indochina, these mechanics to be provided only on the understanding that they would be used at bases where they would be secure from capture and would not be exposed to combat.

c. To send the CAP pilots, with CIA arranging necessary negotiations.

d. Not to provide a "dirigible."

e. To await General O'Daniel's return to Washington before making a decision on the other French requests. Efforts should continue to get the French to contribute a maximum number of mechanics.

It was further agreed that General Smith would clear these recommended actions with the President.

13. The next item discussed was the status of General O'Daniel. Mr. Kyes said General Trapnell, the present Chief of MAAG, is being replaced at the normal expiration of his tour. General Dabney had been chosen to replace General Trapnell and is about to leave for Indochina. Admiral Radford pointed out that General O'Daniel could be made Chief of MAAG without any further clearance with the French Government. General Smith said this would be all right but should not preclude further action to increase the position of General O'Daniel. General Erskine pointed out that the MAAG in Indochina is not a "military mission" but only an administrative group concerned with the provision of MDAP equipment. He thought the MAAG status should be raised to that of a mission which could help in training. It was agreed that General O'Daniel should probably be first assigned as Chief of MAAG and that, for this reason, General Dabney's departure for Indochina should be temporarily held up. General Dabney should, however, go to Indochina to assist General O'Daniel by heading up the present MAAG functions. Admiral Davis was requested to assure that General Dabney did not depart until further instructions were given.

20. Mr. Allen Dulles inquired if an unconventional warfare officer, specifically Colonel Lansdale, could not be added to the group of five liaison officers to which General Navarre had agreed. Admiral Radford thought this might be done and at any rate Colonel Lansdale could immediately be attached to the MAAG, but he wondered if it would not be best for Colonel Lansdale to await General O'Daniel's return before going to Indochina. In this way, Colonel Lansdale could help the working group in its revision of General Erskine's paper. This was agreeable to Mr. Allen Dulles.

1. Present at the meeting were:

Department of Defense—Mr. Kyes, Admiral Radford, Admiral Davis, General Erskine, Mr. Godel, B/G Bonesteel, Colonel Alden.

Department of State—General Smith, Mr. Robertson.

CIA—Mr. Allen Dulles, General Cabell, Mr. Aurell, Colonel Lansdale.

'54 Report by Special Committee On the Threat of Communism

Excerpts from Part II of the Special Committee's Report on Southeast Asia, April 5, 1954. Part I was not made available with it.

IV Conclusions

A. The Special Committee considers that these factors reinforce the necessity of assuring that Indo-China remain in the non-Communist bloc, and believes that defeat of the Viet Minh in Indo-China is essential if the spread of Communist influence in Southeast Asia is to be halted.

B. Regardless of the outcome of military operations in Indo-China and without compromising in any way the overwhelming strategic importance of the Associated States to the Western position in the area, the U.S. should take all affirmative and practical steps, with or without its European allies, to provide tangible evidence of Western strength and determination to defeat Communism; to demonstrate that ultimate victory will be won by the free world; and to secure the affirmative association of Southeast Asian states with these purposes.

C. That for these purposes the Western position in Indo-China must be maintained and improved by a military victory.

D. That without compromise to C, above, the U.S. should in all prudence reinforce the remainder of Southeast Asia, including the land areas of Malaya, Burma, Thailand, Indonesia and the Philippines.

Recommended Courses of Action*

A. The Special Committee wishes to reaffirm the following recommendations which are made in NCS 5405, the Special Committee Report concerning military operations in Indo-China, and the position paper of the Special Committee, concurred in by the Department of Defense, concerning U.S. courses of action and policies with respect to the Geneva Conference:

(1) It be U.S. policy to accept nothing short of a military victory in Indo-China.

(2) It be the U.S. position to obtain French support of this position; and that failing this, the U.S. actively oppose any negotiated settlement in Indo-China at Geneva.

(3) It be the U.S. position in event of failure of (2) above to initiate immediate steps with the governments of the Associated States aimed toward the continuation of the war in Indo-China, to include active U.S. participation and without French support should that be necessary.

(4) Regardless of whether or not the U.S. is successful in obtaining French support for the active U.S. participation called for in (3) above, every effort should be made to undertake this active participation in concert with other interested nations.

B. The Special Committee also considers that all possible political and economic pressure on France must be exerted as the obvious initial course of action to reinforce the French will to continue operations [sic] in Indo-China. The Special Committee recognizes that this course of action will jeopardize the existing French Cabinet, may be unpopular among the French public, and may be considered as endangering present U.S. policy with respect to EDC. The Committee nevertheless considers that the free world strategic position, not only

*The Department of State representative recommends the deletion of paragraphs A and B hereunder as being redundant and included in other documents.

in Southeast Asia but in Europe and the Middle East as well, is such as to require the most extraordinary efforts to prevent Communist domination of Southeast Asia. The Committee considers that firm and resolute action now in this regard may well be the key to a solution of the entire problem posed by France in the free world community of nations.

C. In order to make the maximum contribution to the free world strength in Southeast Asia, and regardless of the outcome of military operations currently in progress in Indo-China, the U.S. should, in all prudence, take the following courses of action in addition to those set forth in NSC 5405 and in Part I of the Special Committee Report:

Political and Military:

(I) Ensure that there be initiated no cease-fire in Indo-China prior to victory whether that be by successful military action or clear concession of defeat by the Communists.

Action: State, CIA

(2) Extraordinary and unilateral, as well as multi-national, efforts should be undertaken to give vitality in Southeast Asia to the concept that Communist imperialism is a transcending threat to each of the Southeast Asian states. These efforts should be so undertaken as to appear through local initiative rather than as a result of U.S. or UK, or French instigation.

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continued

ACTION: USIA, State, CIA

(3) It should be U. S. policy to develop within the UN Charter a Far Eastern regional arrangement subscribed and underwritten by the major European powers with interests in the Pacific.

a. Full accomplishment of such an arrangement can only be developed in the long term and should therefore be preceded by the development, through, indigenous sources, or regional economic and cultural agreements between the several Southeast Asian countries and later with Japan. Such agreements might take a form similar to that of OEEC in Europe.

Action: State, CIA, FOA

b. Upon the basis of such agreements, the U. S. should actively but unobtrusively seek their expansion into mutual defense agreements and should for this purpose be prepared to underwrite such agreements with military and economic aid and should [rest unavailable].

D. The courses of action outlined above are considered as mandatory regardless of the outcome of military operations in Indo-China.

(1) If Indo-China is held they are needed to build up strength and resistance to Communism in the entire area.

(2) If Indo-China is lost they are essential as partial steps:

a. To delay as long as possible the extension of Communist domination throughout the Far East, or

b. In conjunction with offensive operations to retake Indo-China from the Communists.

(3) Should Indo-China be lost it is clear to the Special Committee that the involvement of U. S. resources either in an attempt to stop the further spread of Communism in the Far East, (which is bound, except in terms of the most extensive military and political effort, to be futile) or to initiate offensive operations to retake and reorient Indo-China, (which would involve a major military campaign), will greatly exceed those needed to hold Indo-China before it falls.

(4) Furthermore, either of these undertakings (in the light of the major setback to U. S. national policy involved in the loss of Indo-China) would entail as an urgent prerequisite the restoration of Asian morale and confidence in U. S. policy which will have reached an unprecedentedly low level in the area.

(5) Each of these courses of action would involve greater risk of war with Communist China, and possibly the Soviet Union, than timely preventive action taken under more favorable circumstances before Indo-China is lost.

Dillon Cable to Dulles on Appeal For Air Support at Dienbienphu

Cablegram from Douglas Dillon, United States Ambassador to France, to Secretary of State John Foster Dulles on April 5, 1954.

URGENT. I was called at 11 o'clock Sunday night and asked to come immediately to Matignon where a restricted Cabinet meeting was in progress. On arrival Bidault received me in Laniel's office and was joined in a few minutes by Laniel. They said that immediate armed intervention of US carrier aircraft at Dien Bien Phu is now necessary to save the situation.

Navarre reports situation there now in state of precarious equilibrium and that both sides are doing best to reinforce—Viet Minh are bringing up last available reinforcements which will way outnumber any reinforcing French can do by parachute drops. Renewal of assault by reinforced Viet Minh probable by middle or end of week. Without help by then fate of Dien Bien Phu will probably be sealed.

Ely brought back report from Washington that Radford gave him his personal (repeat personal) assurance that if situation at Dien Bien Phu required US naval air support he would do his best to obtain such help from US Government. Because of this information from Radford as reported by Ely, French Government now asking for US carrier aircraft support at Dien Bien Phu. Navarre feels that a relatively minor US effort could turn the tide but naturally hopes for as much help as possible. French report Chinese intervention in Indochina already fully established as follows:

First. Fourteen technical advisors at Giap headquarters plus numerous others at division level. All under command of Chinese Communist General Ly Chen-hou who is stationed at Giap headquarters.

Second. Special telephone lines installed maintained and operated by Chinese personnel.

Third. Forty 37 mm. anti-aircraft guns radar-controlled at Dien Bien Phu. These

guns operated by Chinese and evidently are from Korea. These AA guns are now shooting through clouds to bring down French aircraft.

Fourth. One thousand supply trucks of which 500 have arrived since 1 March, all driven by Chinese army personnel.

Fifth. Substantial material help in guns, shells, etc., as is well known.

Bidault said that French Chief of Air Staff wished US be informed that US air intervention at Dien Bien Phu could lead to Chinese Communist air attack on delta airfields. Nevertheless, government was making request for aid.

Bidault closed by saying that for good or evil the fate of Southeast Asia now rested on Dien Bien Phu. He said that Geneva would be won or lost depending on outcome at Dien Bien Phu. This was reason for French request for this very serious action on our part.

He then emphasized necessity for speed in view of renewed attack which is expected before end of week. He thanked US for prompt action on airlift for French paratroops. He then said that he had received Dulles' proposal for Southeast Asian coalition, and that he would answer as soon as possible later in week as restricted Cabinet session not competent to make this decision.

New Subject. I passed on Norstad's concern that news of airlift (DEPTEL 3470, April 3) might leak as planes assembled. Plevin was called into room. He expressed extreme concern as any leak would lead to earlier Viet Minh attack. He said at all costs operation must be camouflaged as training exercise until troops have arrived. He is preparing them as rapidly as possible and they will be ready to leave in a week. Bidault and Laniel pressed him to hurry up departure date of troops and he said he would do his utmost.

Dulles Cable Barring Intervention

Cablegram from Secretary Dulles to Ambassador Dillon in Paris, April 5, 1954.

As I personally explained to Ely in presence of Radford, it is not (rpt not) possible for US to commit belligerent acts in Indochina without full political understanding with France and other countries. In addition, Congressional action would be required. After conference at highest level, I must confirm this position. US is doing everything possible as indicated my 5175 to prepare public, Congressional and Constitutional basis for united action in Indo-

china. However, such action is impossible except on coalition basis with active British Commonwealth participation. Meanwhile US prepared, as has been demonstrated, to do everything short of belligerency.

FYI US cannot and will not be put in position of alone salvaging British Commonwealth interests in Malaya, Australia and New Zealand. This matter now under discussion with UK at highest level.

Dillon Reply on French Reaction

Cablegram from Ambassador Dillon to Secretary Dulles, April 5, 1954.

I delivered message DEPTEL 3482 to Bidault Monday evening. He asked me to tell Secretary that he personally could well understand position US Government and would pass on your answer to Laniel.

He asked me to say once more that

unfortunately the time for formulating coalitions has passed as the fate of Indochina will be decided in the next ten days at Dien-Bien-Phu. As I left he said that even though French must fight alone they would continue fighting and he prayed God they would be successful.

Memo of Eisenhower-Dulles Talk On the French Cease-Fire Plan

Memorandum by Robert Cutler, special assistant to President Dwight D. Eisenhower, May 7, 1954.

At a meeting in the President's office this morning with Dulles, three topics were discussed.

1. Whether the President should approve paragraph 1b of the tentative Record of Action of the 5/6/54 NSC meeting, which covers the proposed answer to the Eden proposal. The Secretary of State thought the text was correct. Wilson and Radford preferred the draft message to Smith for Eden prepared yesterday by MacArthur and Captain Anderson, and cleared by the JCS, which included in the Five Power Staff Agency Thailand and the Philippines. Radford thinks that the Agency (which has hitherto been not disclosed in SEA) has really completed its military planning; that if it is enlarged by top level personnel, its actions will be necessarily open to the world; that therefore some Southeast Asian countries should be included in it, and he fears Eden's proposal as an intended delaying action.

The President approved the text of paragraph 1b but suggested that Smith's reply to Eden's proposal should make clear the following:

a. Five Power Staff Agency, alone or with other nations, is not to the United States a satisfactory substitute for a broad political coalition which will include the Southeast Asian countries which are to be defended.

b. Five Power Staff Agency examination is acceptable to see how these nations can give military aid to the Southeast Asian countries in the cooperative defense effort.

c. The United States will not agree to a "white man's party" to determine the problems of the Southeast Asian nations.

I was instructed to advise Wilson and Radford of the above, and have done so.

2. The President went over the draft

of the speech which Dulles is going to make tonight, making quite a few suggestions and changes in text. He thought additionally the speech should include some easy to understand slogans, such as "The US will never start a war," "The US will not go to war without Congressional authority," "The US, as always, is trying to organize cooperative efforts to sustain the peace."

3. With reference to the cease-fire proposal transmitted by Bidault to the French cabinet, I read the following, as views principally of military members of the Planning Board, expressed in their yesterday afternoon meeting:

a. US should not support the Bidault proposal.

b. Reasons for this position:

a. The mere proposal of the cease-fire at the Geneva Conference would destroy the will to fight of French forces and make fence-sitters jump to Vietminh side.

b. The Communists would evade covertly cease-fire controls.

c. The US should (as a last act to save IndoChina) propose to France that if the following 5 conditions are met, the US will go to Congress for authority to intervene with combat forces:

a. grant of genuine freedom for Associated States

b. US take major responsibility for training indigenous forces

c. US share responsibility for military planning

d. French forces to stay in the fight and no requirement of replacement of US forces

(e. Action under UN auspices?)

This offer to be made known simultaneously to the other members of the proposed regional grouping (UK, Aus-

tralia, NZ, Thailand, Associated States, Philippines) in order to enlist their participation.

I then summarized possible objections to making the above proposal to the French:

a. No French Government is now competent to act in a lasting way.

b. There is no indication France wants to "internationalize" the conflict.

c. The US proposal would be made without the prior assurance of a regional grouping of SEA states, a precondition of Congress; although this point might be added as another condition to the proposal.

d. US would be "bailing out colonial France" in the eyes of the world.

e. US cannot undertake alone to save every situation of trouble.

I concluded that some PB members felt that it had never been made clear to the French that the US was willing to ask for Congressional authority, if certain fundamental preconditions were met; that these matters had only been hinted at, and that the record of history should be clear as to the US position. Dulles was interested to know the President's views, because he is talking with Ambassador Bonnet this afternoon. He indicated that he would mention these matters to Bonnet, perhaps making a more broad hint than heretofore. He would not circulate any formal paper to Bonnet, or to anyone else.

The President referred to the proposition advanced by Governor Stassen at the April 29 Council Meeting as not having been thoroughly thought out. He said that he had been trying to get France to "internationalize" matters for a long time, and they are not willing to do so. If it were thought advisable at this time to point out to the French the essential preconditions to the US asking for Congressional authority to intervene, then it should also be made clear to the French as an additional precondition that the US would never intervene alone, that there must be an invitation by the indigenous people, and that there must be some kind of regional and collective action.

I understand that Dulles will decide the extent to which he cares to follow this line with Ambassador Bonnet. This discussion may afford Dulles guidance in replying to Smith's request about a US alternative to support the Bidault proposal, but there really was no decision as to the US attitude toward the cease-fire proposal itself.

Eisenhower's Instructions To U.S. Envoy at Geneva Talks

Cablegram from Secretary of State Dulles to Under Secretary Walter Bedell Smith, May 12, 1954.

The following basic instructions, which have been approved by the President, and which are in confirmation of those already given you orally, will guide you, as head of the United States Delegation, in your participation in the Indochina phase of the Geneva Conference.

1. The presence of a United States representative during the discussion at the Geneva Conference of "the problem of restoring peace in Indochina" rests on the Berlin Agreement of February 18, 1954. Under that agreement the US, UK, France, and USSR agreed that the four of them plus other interested states should be invited to a conference at Geneva on April 26 "for the purpose of reaching a peaceful settlement of the Korean question" and agreed further, that "the problem of restoring peace in Indochina" would also be discussed at Geneva by the four powers represented at Berlin, and Communist China and other interested states.

2. You will not deal with the delegates of the Chinese Communist regime, or any other regime not now diplomatically recognized by the United States, on any terms which imply political recognition or which concede to that regime any status other than that of a regime with which it is necessary to deal on a de facto basis in order to end aggression or the threat of aggression, and to obtain peace.

3. The position of the United States in the Indochina phase of the Geneva Conference is that of an interested nation which, however, is neither a belligerent nor a principal in the negotiation.

4. The United States is participating in the Indochina phase of the Conference in order thereby to assist in arriving at decisions which will help the nations of

that area peacefully to enjoy territorial integrity and political independence under stable and free governments with the opportunity to expand their economies, to realize their legitimate national aspirations, and to develop security through individual and collective defense against aggression, from within or without. This implies that these people should not be amalgamated into the Communist bloc of imperialistic dictatorship.

5. The United States is not prepared to give its express or implied approval to any cease-fire, armistice, or other settlement which would have the effect of subverting the existing lawful governments of the three aforementioned states or of permanently impairing their territorial integrity or of placing in jeopardy the forces of the French Union in Indochina, or which otherwise contravened the principles stated in (4) above.

6. You should, insofar as is compatible with these instructions, cooperate with the Delegation of France and with the Delegations of other friendly participants in this phase of the Conference.

7. If in your judgment continued participation in the Indochina phase of the Conference appears likely to involve the United States in a result inconsistent with its policy, as stated above, you should immediately so inform your Government, recommending either withdrawal or the limitation of the US role to that of an observer. If the situation develops such that, in your opinion, either of such actions is essential under the circumstances and time is lacking for consultation with Washington, you may act in your discretion.

8. You are authorized to inform other delegations at Geneva of these instructions.

reference to the Far East as a whole, Indochina is devoid of decisive military objectives and the allocation of more than token U.S. armed forces in Indochina would be a serious diversion of limited U.S. capabilities. The principal sources of Viet Minh military supply lie outside Indochina. The destruction or neutralization of these sources in China proper would materially reduce the French military problems in Indochina.

b. In connection with the above, it may be readily anticipated that, upon Chinese Communist intervention in Indochina, the French would promptly request the immediate deployment of U.S. ground and air forces, additional naval forces, and a considerable increase in MDAF armament and equipment. The Joint Chiefs of Staff have stated their belief that committing to the Indochina conflict naval forces in excess of a Fast Carrier Task Force and supporting forces as necessary in accordance with the developments in the situation, of basing substantial air forces in Indochina, will involve redeployment of forces and reduce readiness to meet probable Chinese Communist reaction elsewhere in the Far East. Simultaneously, it is necessary to keep in mind the considerable Allied military potential available in the Korea-Japan-Okinawa area.

c. In light of the above, it is clear that the denial of these forces to Indochina could result in a schism between the United States and France unless they were employed elsewhere. However, it should be noted that the Joint Chiefs of Staff have plans, both approved and under consideration, which provide for the employment of these forces in combat operations outside Indochina. Nevertheless, it is desired to repeat that this particular report is responsive to the question of U.S. intervention in Indochina only.

Assuming the Chinese Communists Intervene

3. Strategic Concept and Plan of Operation

Seek to create conditions through the destruction of effective Communist forces and their means for support in the Indochina action and by reducing Chinese Communist capability for further aggression, under which Associated States forces could assume responsibility for the defense of Indochina. In the light of this concept the major courses of action would be as follows:

a. Employing atomic weapons, whenever advantageous, as well as other weapons, conduct offensive air operations against selected military targets in Indochina and against those military targets in China, Hainan, and other Communist-held offshore islands which are being used by the Communists in direct support of their operations, or which threaten the security of U.S. and allied forces in the area.

b. Simultaneously, French Union Forces, augmented by U.S. naval, and air forces, would exploit by coordinated ground, naval, and air action such success as result of the aforementioned air operations in order to destroy enemy forces in Indochina.

Excerpts from memorandum from Admiral Arthur W. Radford, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, to Secretary of Defense Charles E. Wilson, May 26, 1954, on "Studies With Respect to Possible U.S. Action Regarding Indochina." The italicized emphasis appears in the original document.

1. Reference is made to the memorandum by the Acting Secretary of Defense, dated 18 May 1954, subject as above, wherein the Joint Chiefs of Staff were requested to prepare certain studies, and agreed outline answers to certain questions relating thereto, for discussion with the Acting Secretary of Defense on or before 24 May, and for subsequent submission to the National Security Council (NSC).

2 a. The Studies requested by the Acting Secretary of Defense were developed within the parameters prescribed in the memorandum by the Executive Secretary, NSC, dated 18 May 1954, subject as above. This memorandum is interpreted as assuming no concurrent involvement in Korea. This assumption may be quite unrealistic and lead to malemployment of available forces. The Joint Chiefs of Staff desire to point out their belief that, from the point of view of the United States, with

continued

c. Conduct coordinated ground, naval, and air action to destroy enemy forces in Indochina.

d. In the light of circumstances prevailing at the time, and subject to an evaluation of the results of operations conducted under subparagraphs a and b above, be prepared to take further action against Communist China to reduce its war-making capability, such as:

(1) Destruction of additional selected military targets. In connection with these additional targets, such action requires an enlarged but highly selective atomic offensive in addition to attacks employing other weapons systems.

(2) Blockade of the China coast. This might be instituted progressively from the outset.

(3) Seizure or neutralization of Hainan Island.

(4) Operations against the Chinese mainland by Chinese Nationalist forces....

Assuming Chinese Communists Do Not Intervene

9. Strategic Concept and Plan of Action

Seek to create conditions by destroying effective Communist forces in Indochina, under which the Associated States Forces could assume responsibility for the defense of Indochina. In the light of this concept, the major courses of action which would be undertaken are as follows:

a. Conduct air operations in support of allied forces in Indochina. The employment of atomic weapons is contemplated in the event that such course appears militarily advantageous.

b. Simultaneously, French Union Forces augmented by such armed forces of the Philippines and Thailand as may be committed would, in coordination with U.S. naval and Air Force forces, conduct coordinated ground, naval and air action to destroy enemy forces in Indochina.

Cable by Dulles on Negotiations At Geneva on Vietnam Elections

Cablegram by Secretary Dulles to United States Embassy in Paris with copies to the United States Embassies in London and Saigon and to United States Consul General in Geneva for Under Secretary Bedell Smith, July 7, 1954.

We see no real conflict between paragraphs 4 and 5 US-UK terms. We realize of course that even agreement which appears to meet all seven points cannot constitute guarantee that Indochina will not one day pass into Communist hands. Seven points are intended to provide best chance that this shall not happen. This will require observance of criteria not merely in the letter but in the spirit. Thus since undoubtedly true that elections might eventually mean unification Vietnam under Ho Chi Minh this makes it all more important they should be only held as long after ceasefire agreement as possible and in conditions free from intimidation to give democratic elements best chance. We believe important that no date should be set now and especially that no conditions should be accepted by French which would have direct or indirect effect of preventing effective international supervision of agreement ensuring political as well as military

guarantees. Also note paragraph 3 of President and Prime Minister joint declaration of June 29 regarding QTE unity through free elections supervised by the UN UNQTE.

Our interpretation of willingness QTE respect UNQTE agreement which might be reached is that we would not (repeat not) oppose a settlement which conformed to seven points contained Deptel 4853. It does not (repeat not) of course mean we would guarantee such settlement or that we would necessarily support it publicly. We consider QTE respect UNQTE as strong a word as we can possibly employ in the circumstances to indicate our position with respect to such arrangements as French may evolve along lines points contained in DEPTEL 4853. QTE respect UNQTE would also mean that we would not seek directly or indirectly to upset settlement by force.

You may convey substance above to French.

Details on Chinese Informant

Cablegram from Under Secretary Bedell Smith at Geneva to Secretary Dulles, July 19, 1954.

Topping has supplied in confidence following background information concerning his story on views of Chinese Communist delegation.

He stated his informant was Huang Hua, whom he has known for many years. Interview was at Huang's initiative, was called on short notice, and was conducted in extremely serious manner without propaganda harangues.

Topping said he had reported Huang's statement fully in his story but had obtained number of "visual impressions" during interview. When Huang spoke of possibility American bases in Indochina or anti-Communist pact in Southeast Asia, he became very agitated, his hands shook, and his usually excellent English broke down, forcing him to work through interpreter. Huang also spoke seriously and with apparent sincerity concerning his belief that I have

returned to Geneva to prevent settlement. Topping believes Chinese Communists convinced Americans made deal with French during Paris talks on basis of which Mendes-France has raised price of settlement.

Glossary of Terms

B.O.Q.—Bachelor officers' quarters.
 C.A.T.—Civil Air Transport, airline based on Taiwan.
 DEPTEL—State Department telegram.
 E.D.C.—European Defense Community.
 F.E.C.—French Expeditionary Corps.
 F.O.A.—Foreign Operations Administration.
 J.C.S.—Joint Chiefs of Staff.
 MAAG—Military Assistance Advisory Group.
 MDAP—Mutual Defense Assistance Program.
 N.S.C.—National Security Council.
 O.E.E.C.—Organization for European Economic Cooperation.
 O.S.D.—Office of Secretary of Defense.
 SEA—Southeast Asia.
 U.S.O.M.—U.S. Operations Mission.

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Excerpts From Lansdale Team's Report on Chinese Communists' Position On a Neutralized Indochina

Covert Vietnam Mission in '54 and '55

Cablegram from Under Secretary of State Bedell Smith at Geneva to Secretary Dulles, July 18, 1954.

Following despatch given us in advance by Topping of Associated Press apparently represents official Chinese Communist position and was given Topping in order that we would become aware of it. It begins:

QUOTE

"The Communist bloc has demanded that the United States guarantee the partition peace plan for Indochina and join in an agreement to neutralize the whole country, a responsible Chinese Communist informant said today.

The informant, who reflects the views of Red China Premier Chou En-lai, said the Communists are hopeful of a cease-fire agreement by next Tuesday's deadline if the Western powers agree to 'bar all foreign-military bases from Indochina and keep the three member states out of any military bloc.'

The informant said the Communists are pressing for the stamp of American approval on the armistice agreement—already okayed in principle by Britain and France—which would divide Vietnam between Communist leader Ho Chi Minh's Viet Minh and Bao Dai's pro-Western regime.

"We believe that the US as a member of the conference should and is obligated to subscribe to and guarantee any settlement. Morally, there is no reason for the US to avoid this obligation."

But the informant did not (repeat not) rule out the chance of an Indochina cease-fire even if the US refuses to okay the armistice agreement.

The Eisenhower administration has told France and Britain that they can go ahead with their plan for an Indochina settlement based on partition of Vietnam. But Washington has made it clear that it is not (repeat not) ready to associate itself formally with the plan which would sanction putting millions of Vietnamese under Red rule.

The Communist informant said the 'crucial issue' now in the Geneva peace negotiations revolves around whether the Western powers will agree effectively to neutralize Indochina.

'Refusal to join in such a guarantee,' the informant said, 'could seriously deter a final settlement. On other important points in the negotiations we are in agreement or close to it. We are hopeful and we believe that there is time to reach a settlement by July 20.'

French Premier Pierre Mendes-France

has promised to resign with his Cabinet if he fails to end the bloody eight-year-old war by next Tuesday. Fall of the French Government probably would doom the Geneva negotiations. The informant declared that American efforts to organize a Southeast Asia Treaty organization (SEATO) is a 'threat to any possible Indochina agreement.'

'Success or failure of the Geneva Conference may depend on the attitude of the American delegation in this regard,' he added.

END QUOTE

The above seems to me extremely significant, particularly in view of the fact that in my discussion with Eden last night he expressed pessimism, which he said was now shared for the first time by Krishna Menon. Latter had begun to feel, as I do, that Molotov wishes to force Mendes-France's resignation. Eden remarked that Molotov had now become the most difficult and intransigent member of Communist delegation. You will note obvious intention to place on shoulders of US responsibility for failure of Geneva Conference and fall of French Government if this occurs.

Molotov is insisting on a meeting this afternoon which French and British are trying to make highly restricted as they are apprehensive of what may occur. If such a meeting is held and if demands are made for US association in any agreement, I will simply say that in the event a reasonable settlement is arrived at which US could "respect", US will probably issue a unilateral statement of its own position. If question of participation Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam in security pact is raised, I will reply that this depends on outcome of conference.

Eden has already told Molotov that security pact is inevitable, that he himself favored it some time ago and that he would not (repeat not) withdraw from that position, but he made the mistake of saying that no consideration had been given to inclusion of Laos and Cambodia.

This final gambit is going to be extremely difficult to play and I do not (repeat not) now see the moves clearly. However, my opinion as expressed to you before leaving, i.e., that Molotov will gain more by bringing down Mendes Government than by a settlement, has grown stronger.

Following are excerpts from the report of the Saigon Military Mission, an American team headed by Edward G. Lansdale, covering its activities in the 1954-55 period. The report accompanies the Pentagon's study of the Vietnam war, which cites it without identifying the author or date. The excerpts appear verbatim, with only unmistakable typographical errors corrected.

I. FOREWORD

...This is the condensed account of one year in the operations of a "cold war" combat team, written by the team itself in the field, little by little in moments taken as the members could. The team is known as the Saigon Military Mission. The field is Vietnam. There are other teams in the field, American, French, British, Chinese, Vietnamese, Vietminh, and others. Each has its own story to tell. This is ours.

The Saigon Military Mission entered Vietnam on 1 June 1954 when its Chief arrived. However, this is the story of a team, and it wasn't until August 1954, that sufficient members arrived to constitute a team. So, this is mainly an account of the team's first year, from August 1954 to August 1955.

It was often a frustrating and perplexing year, up close. The Geneva Agreements signed on 21 July 1954 imposed restrictive rules upon all official Americans, including the Saigon Military Mission. An active and intelligent enemy made full use of legal rights to screen his activities in establishing his stay-behind organizations south of the 17th Parallel and in obtaining quick security north of that Parallel. The nation's economy and communications system were crippled by eight years of open war. The government, including its Army and other security forces, was in a painful transition from colonial to self rule, making it a year of hot-tempered incidents. Internal problems arose quickly to points where armed conflict was sought as the only solution. The enemy was frequently forgotten in the heavy atmosphere of suspicion, hatred, and jealousy.

The Saigon Military Mission received some blows from allies and the enemy in this atmosphere, as we worked to help stabilize the government and to beat the Geneva time-table of Communist takeover in the north. However, we did beat the time-table. The government did become stabilized. The Free Vietnamese are now becoming unified and learning how to cope with the Communist enemy. We are thankful that we had a chance to help in this work in a critical area of the world, to be positive and constructive in a year of doubt.

II. MISSION

The Saigon Military Mission (SMM) was born in a Washington policy meeting early in 1954, when Dien Bien Phu was still holding out against the encircling Vietminh. The SMM was to enter into Vietnam quietly and assist the Vietnamese, rather than the French, in unconventional warfare. The French were to be kept as friendly allies in the process, as far as possible.

The broad mission for the team was to undertake paramilitary operations against the enemy and to wage political-psychological warfare. Later, after Geneva, the mission was modified to prepare the means for undertaking paramilitary operations in Communist areas rather than to wage unconventional warfare....

III. HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR

a. Early Days

The Saigon Military Mission (SMM) started on 1 June 1954, when its Chief, Colonel Edward G. Lansdale, USAF, arrived in Saigon with a small box of files and clothes and a borrowed typewriter, courtesy of an SA-16 flight set up for him by the 13th Air Force at Clark AFB. Lt-General John O'Daniel and Embassy Charge Rob McClintock had arranged for his appointment as Assistant Air Attaché, since it was improper for U.S. officers at MAAG at that time to have advisory conferences with Vietnamese officers. Ambassador Heath had concurred already. There was no desk space for an office, no vehicle, no safe for files. He roomed with General O'Daniel, later moved to a small house rented by MAAG. Secret communications with Washington were provided through the Saigon station of CIA.

There was deepening gloom in Vietnam. Dien Bien Phu had fallen. The French were capitulating to the Vietminh at Geneva. The first night in Saigon, Vietminh saboteurs blew up large ammunition dumps at the airport, rocking Saigon throughout the night. General O'Daniel and Charge McClintock agreed that it was time to start taking positive action. O'Daniel paved the way for a quick first-hand survey of the situation throughout the country. McClintock paved the way for contacts with Vietnamese political leaders. Our Chief's reputation from the Philippines had preceded him. Hundreds of Vietnamese acquaintanceships were made quickly.

Working in close cooperation with George Hellyer, USIS Chief, a new psychological warfare campaign was devised for the Vietnamese Army and for the government in Hanoi. Shortly after, a refresher course in constructed and Vietnamese Army personnel were rushed through it. A similar

course was initiated for the Ministry of Information. Rumor campaigns were added, to the tactics and tried out in Hanoi. It was almost too late.

The first rumor campaign was to be a carefully planted story of a Chinese Communist regiment in Tonkin taking reprisals against a Vietminh village whose girls the Chinese had raped, recalling Chinese Nationalist troop behavior in 1945 and confirming Vietnamese fears of Chinese occupation under Vietminh rule; the story was to be planted by soldiers of the Vietnamese Armed Psywar Company in Hanoi dressed in civilian clothes. The troops received their instructions silently, dressed in civilian clothes, went on the mission, and failed to return. They had deserted to the Vietminh. Weeks later, Tonkinese told an excited story of the misbehavior of the Chinese Divisions in Vietminh territory. Investigated, it turned out to be the old rumor campaign, with Vietnamese embellishments.

There was political chaos. Prince Buu Loc no longer headed the government. Government ministries all but closed. The more volatile leaders of political groups were proposing a revolution, which included armed attacks on the French. Col. Jean Carbonel of the French Army proposed establishing a regime with Vietnamese (Nungs and others) known to him close to the Chinese border and asked for our backing. Our reply was that this was a policy decision to be made between the FEC top command and U.S. authorities.

Oscar Arellano, Junior Chamber International vice-president for Southeast Asia, stopped by for a visit with our Chief; an idea in this visit later grew

On 1 July, Major Lucien Concin arrived, as the second member of the team. He is a paramilitary specialist, well-known to the French for his help with French-operated maquis in Tonkin against the Japanese in 1945, the one American guerrilla fighter who had not been a member of the Patti Mission. He was assigned to MAAG for cover purposes. Arranged by Lt-Col William Rossen, a meeting was held with Col Carbonel, Col Nguyen Van Vy, and the two SMM officers; Vy had seen his first combat in 1945 under Concin. Carbonel proposed establishing a maquis, to be kept as a secret between the four officers. SMM refused, learned later that Carbonel had kept the FEC Deuxieme Bureau informed. Shortly afterwards, at a Defense conference with General O'Daniel, our Chief had a chance to suggest Vy for a command in the North, making him a general. Secretary of State for Defense Le Ngoc Chan did so, Vy was grateful and remained so.

Ngo Dinh Diem arrived on 7 July, and within hours was in despair as the French forces withdrew from the Catholic provinces of Phat Diem and Nam Dinh in Tonkin. Catholic militia streamed north to Hanoi and Haiphong, their hearts filled with anger at French abandonment. The two SMM officers stopped a planned grenade attack by militia girls against French troops guarding a warehouse; the girls stated they had not eaten for three days; arrangements were made for Chinese merchants in Haiphong to feed them. Other militia attacks were stopped, including one against a withdrawing French artillery unit; the militia wanted the guns to stand and fight the Vietminh. The Tonkinese had hopes of American friendship and listened to the advice given them. Governor [name illegible] died, reportedly by poison. Tonkin's government changed as despair grew. On 21 July, the Geneva Agreement was signed. Tonkin was given to the Communists. Anti-Communists turned to SMM for help in establishing a resistance movement and several tentative initial arrangements were made.

Diem himself had reached a nadir of frustration, as his country disintegrated after the conference of foreigners. With the approval of Ambassador Heath and General O'Daniel, our Chief drew up a plan of overall governmental action and presented it to Diem, with Hellyer as interpreter. It called for fast constructive action and dynamic leadership. Although the plan was not adopted, it laid the foundation for a friendship which has lasted.

Oscar Arellano visited Saigon again. Major Charles T. R. Bohanan, a former team-mate in Philippine days, was in 1954 at a SMM conference with these two, "Operation Brotherhood" was born.

continued

volunteer medical teams of Free Asians to aid the Free Vietnamese who have few doctors of their own. Washington responded warmly to the idea. President Diem was visited; he issued an appeal to the Free World for help. The Junior Chamber International adopted the idea. SMM would monitor the operation quietly in the background.

President Diem had organized a Committee of Cabinet Ministers to handle the problem of refugees from the Communist North. The Committee system was a failure. No real plans had been made by the French or the Americans. After conferences with USOM (FOA) officials and with General O'Daniel, our Chief suggested to Ambassador Heath that he call a U.S. meeting to plan a single Vietnamese agency, under a Commissioner of Refugees to be appointed by President Diem, to run the Vietnamese refugee program and to provide a channel through which help could be given by the U.S., France, and other free nations. The meeting was called and the plan adopted, with MAAG under General O'Daniel in the coordinating role. Diem adopted the plan. The French pitched in enthusiastically to help. CAT asked SMM for help in obtaining a French contract for the refugee airlift, and got it. In return, CAT provided SMM with the means for secret air travel between the North and Saigon....

Old Saigon Hand: Edward Lansdale

United States Air Force officer, 1947-63; political adviser, South Vietnam, 1954-56; special assistant to Ambassador Henry Cabot Lodge, 1965-68. Born Detroit, Feb. 6, 1908... studied at University of California, Los Angeles... in late nineteen-forties, was adviser to President Ramon Magsaysay of Philippines... helped put down Communist-led Hukbalahap rebellion there... developed basic concept that Communist revolution best opposed by democratic revolution... went to South Vietnam, as Central Intelligence Agency operative, 1954... helped establish Ngo Dinh Diem regime... believed to be model for "Colonel Hillandale" in the novel "The Ugly American" and for "Pyle" in "The Quiet American"... urged creation of Vietnam counterinsurgency force instead of conventional army... reassigned to Pentagon, 1956... reportedly helped develop Special Forces... retired 1963 with rank of major general... returned Saigon, 1965, as special assistant for pacification under Mr. Lodge... his known activities included supervising "rural reconstruction"... serving as liaison between embassy and Vietnamese... well known but mysterious... described as irreplaceable... reticent about his own role... returned United States 1968... in private life, still does magazine writing on Vietnam and counterinsurgency... lives in Alexandria, Va.

b. August 1954

An agreement had been reached that the personnel ceiling of U.S. military personnel with MAAG would be frozen at the number present in Vietnam on the date of the cease-fire, under the terms of the Geneva Agreement. In South Vietnam this deadline was to be 11 August. It meant that SMM might have only two members present, unless action were taken. General O'Daniel agreed to the addition of ten SMM men under MAAG cover, plus any others in the Defense pipeline who arrived before the deadline. A call for help went out. Ten officers in Korea, Japan, and Okinawa were selected and were rushed to Vietnam.

SMM had one small MAAG house. Negotiations were started for other housing, but the new members of the team arrived before housing was ready and were crammed three and four to a hotel room for the first days. Meetings were held to assess the new members' abilities. None had had political-psychological warfare experience. Most were experienced in paramilitary and clandestine intelligence operations. Plans were made quickly, for time was running out in the north; already the Vietminh had started taking over secret control of Hanoi and other areas of Tonkin still held by French forces.

Major Conein was given responsibility for developing a paramilitary organization in the north, to be in position when the Vietminh took over. . . . [His] . . . team was moved north immediately as part of the MAAG staff working on the refugee problem. The team had headquarters in Hanoi, with a branch in Haiphong. Among cover duties, this team supervised the refugee flow for the Hanoi airlift organized by the French. One day, as a CAT C-46 finished

loading, they saw a small child standing on the ground below the loading door. They shouted for the pilot to wait, picked the child up and shoved him into the aircraft, which then promptly taxied out for its takeoff in the constant air shuttle. A Vietnamese man and woman ran up to the team, asking what they had done with their small boy, whom they'd brought out to say goodbye to relatives. The chagrined team explained, finally talked the parents into going south to Free Vietnam, put them in the next aircraft to catch up with their son in Saigon. . . .

A second paramilitary team was formed to explore possibilities of organizing resistance against the Vietminh from bases in the south. This team consisted of Army Lt-Col Raymond Wittmayer, Army Major Fred Allen, and Army Lt Edward Williams. The latter was our only experienced counter-espionage officer and undertook double duties, including working with revolutionary political groups. Major Allen eventually was able to mount a Vietnamese paramilitary effort in Tonkin from the south, barely beating the Vietminh shutdown in Haiphong as his teams went in, trained and equipped for their assigned missions.

Navy Lt Edward Bain and Marine Captain Richard Smith were assigned as the support group for SMM. Actually, support for an effort such as SMM is a major operation in itself, running the gamut from the usual administrative and personnel functions to the intricate business of clandestine air, maritime, and land supply of paramilitary materiel. In effect, they became our official smugglers as well as paymasters, housing officers, transportation officers, warehousemen, file clerks, and mess officers. The work load was such that other team members frequently pitched in and helped.

c. September 1954

Highly-placed officials from Washington visited Saigon and, in private conversations, indicated that current estimates led to the conclusion that Vietnam probably would have to be written off as a loss. We admitted that prospects were gloomy, but were positive that there was still a fighting chance.

On 8 September, SMM officers visited Secretary of State for Defense Chan and walked into a tense situation in his office. Chau had just arrested Lt-Col Lan (G-6 of the Vietnamese Army) and Capt Giai (G-5 of the Army). Armed guards filled the room. We were told what had happened and assured that

everything was all right by all three principals. Later, we discovered that Chan was alone and that the guards were Lt-Col Lan's commandos. Lan was charged with political terrorism (by his "action" squads) and Giai with anti-Diem propaganda (using G-5 leaflet, rumor, and broadcast facilities).

The arrest of Lan and Giai, who simply refused to consider themselves arrested, and of Lt Minh, officer in charge of the Army radio station which was guarded by Army troops, brought into the open a plot by the Army Chief of Staff, General Hinh, to overthrow the government. Hinh had hinted at such a plot to his American friends, using a silver cigarette box given him by

Egypt's Naguib to carry him. SMM became thoroughly involved in the tense controversy which followed, due to our Chief's closeness to both President Diem and General Hinh. He had met the latter in the Philippines in 1952, was a friend of both Hinh's wife and favorite mistress. (The mistress was a pupil in a small English class conducted for mistresses of important personages, at their request....)

While various U.S. officials including General O'Daniel and Foreign Service Officer Frank [name illegible] participated in U.S. attempts to heal the split between the President and his Army, Ambassador Heath asked us to make a major effort to end the controversy. This effort strained relations with Diem and never was successful, but did dampen Army enthusiasm for the plot. At one moment, when there was likelihood of an attack by armored vehicles on the Presidential Palace, SMM told Hinh bluntly that U.S. support most probably would stop in such an event. At the same time a group from the Presidential Guards asked for tactical advice on how to stop armored vehicles with the only weapons available to the Guards: carbines, rifles, and hand grenades. The advice, on tank traps and destruction with improvised weapons, must have sounded grim. The following morning, when the attack was to take place, we visited the Palace; not a guard was left on the grounds; President Diem was alone upstairs, calmly getting his work done.

As a result of the Hinh trouble, Diem started looking around for troops upon whom he could count. Some Tonkinese militia, refugees from the north, were assembled in Saigon close to the Palace. But they were insufficient for what he needed. Diem made an agreement with General Trinh Minh The, leader of some 3,000 Cao Dai dissidents in the vicinity of Tayninh, to give General The some needed financial support; The was to give armed support to the government if necessary and to provide a safehaven for the government if it had to flee. The's guerrillas, known as the Lien Minh, were strongly nationalist and were still fighting the Vietminh and the French. At Ambassador Heath's request, the U.S. secretly furnished Diem with funds for The, through the SMM. Shortly afterwards, an invitation came from The to visit him. Ambassador Heath approved the visit....

The northern SMM team under Conein had organized a paramilitary group, (which we will disguise by the Vietnamese name of Binh) through the Northern Dai Viets, a political party with loyalties to Bao Dai. The group was to be trained and supported by the U.S. as patriotic Vietnamese, to come eventually under government control when the government was ready for such activities. Thirteen Binh were quietly exfiltrated through the port of Haiphong, under the direction of Lt Andrews, and taken on the first stage of the journey to their training area by a U.S. Navy ship. This was the first of a series of helpful actions by Task Force 93, commanded by

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operations was being developed in Saigon through General Nguyen Van Vy. In September this group started shaping up fast, and the project was given to Major Allen. (We will give this group the Vietnamese name of Hao). . . .

Towards the end of the month, it was learned that the largest printing establishment in the north intended to remain in Hanoi and do business with the Vietminh. An attempt was made by SMM to destroy the modern presses, but Vietminh security agents already had moved into the plant and frustrated the attempt. This operation was under a Vietnamese patriot whom we shall call Trieu; his case officer was Capt Arundel. Earlier in the month they had engineered a black psywar strike in Hanoi: leaflets signed by the Vietminh instructing Tonkinese on how to behave for the Vietminh takeover of the Hanoi region in early October, including items about property, money reform, and a three-day holiday of workers upon takeover. The day following the distribution of these leaflets, refugee registration tripled. Two days later Vietminh currency was worth half the value prior to the leaflets. The Vietminh took to the radio to denounce the leaflets: the leaflets were so authentic in appearance that even most of the rank and file Vietminh were sure that the radio denunciations were a French trick.

The Hanoi psywar strike had other consequences. Binh had enlisted a high police official of Hanoi as part of his team, to effect the release from jail of any team members if arrested. The official at the last moment decided to assist in the leaflet distribution personally. Police officers spotted him, chased his vehicle through the empty Hanoi streets of early morning, finally opened fire on him and caught him. He was the only member of the group caught. He was held in prison as a Vietminh agent.

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facilities, harbor, and bridge). The team had a bad moment when contaminating the oil. They had to work quickly at night, in an enclosed storage room. Fumes from the contaminant came close to knocking them out. Dizzy and weak-kneed, they masked their faces with handkerchiefs and completed the job.

Meanwhile, Polish and Russian ships had arrived in the south to transport southern Vietminh to Tonkin under the Geneva Agreement. This offered the opportunity for another black psywar strike. A leaflet was developed by Binh with the help of Capt Arundel, attributed to the Vietminh Resistance Committee. Among other items, it reassured the Vietminh they would be kept safe below decks from imperialist air and submarine attacks, and requested that warm clothing be brought; the warm clothing item would be coupled with a verbal rumor campaign that Vietminh were being sent into China as railroad laborers.

SMM had been busily developing G-5 of the Vietnamese Army for such psywar efforts. Under Arundel's direction, the First Armed Propaganda Company printed the leaflets and distributed them, by soldiers in civilian clothes who penetrated into southern Vietminh zones on foot. (Distribution in Camau was made while columnist Joseph Alsop was on his visit there which led to his sensational, gloomy articles later; our soldier "Vietminh" failed in an attempt to get the leaflet into Alsop's hands in Camau; Alsop was never told this story). Intelligence reports and other later reports revealed that village and delegation committees complained about "deportation" to the north, after distribution of the leaflet....

d. October 1954

Hanoi was evacuated on 9 October. The northern SMM team left with the last French troops, disturbed by what they had seen of the grim efficiency of the Vietminh in their takeover, the contrast between the silent march of the victorious Vietminh troops in their tennis shoes and the clanking armor of the well-equipped French whose Western tactics and equipment had failed against the Communist military-political-economic campaign.

The northern team had spent the last days of Hanoi in contaminating the oil supply of the bus company for a gradual wreckage of engines in the buses, in taking the first actions for delayed sabotage of the railroad (which required teamwork with a CIA special technical team in Japan who performed their part brilliantly), and in writing detailed notes of potential targets for future paramilitary operations (U.S. adherence to the Geneva Agreement prevented SMM from carrying out the active sabotage it desired to do against the power plant,

Contention between Diem and Hinh had become murderous. . . . Finally, we learned that Hinh was close to action; he had selected 26 October as the morning for an attack on the Presidential Palace. Hinh was counting heavily on Lt-Col Lan's special forces and on Captain Giai who was running Hinh's secret headquarters at Hinh's home. We invited these two officers to visit the Philippines, on the pretext that we were making an official trip, could take them along and open the way for them to see some inner workings of the fight against Filipino Communists which they probably would never see otherwise. Hinh reluctantly turned down his own invitation; he had had a memorable time of it on his last visit to Manila in 1952. Lt-Col Lan was a French agent and the temptation to see behind-the-scenes was too much. He and Giai accompanied SMM officers on the MAAG C-47 which General O'Daniel instantly made available for the operation. 26 October was spent in the Philippines. The attack on the palace didn't come off.

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continued

e. November 1954

General Lawton Collins arrived as Ambassador on 8 November. . . .

Collins, in his first press conference, made it plain that the U.S. was supporting President Diem. The new Ambassador applied pressure on General Hinh and on 29 November Hinh left for Paris. His other key conspirators followed.

Part of the SMM team became involved in staff work to back up the energetic campaign to save Vietnam which Collins pushed forward. Some SMM members were scattered around the Pacific, accompanying Vietnamese for secret training, obtaining and shipping supplies to be smuggled into north Vietnam and hidden there. In the Philippines, more support was being constructed to help SMM, in expediting the flow of supplies, and in creating Freedom Company, a non-profit Philippines corpo-

ration backed by President Magsaysay, which would supply Filipinos experienced in fighting the Communist Huks to help in Vietnam (or elsewhere)....

On 23 November, twenty-one selected Vietnamese agents and two cooks of our Hao paramilitary group were put aboard a Navy ship in the Saigon River, in daylight. They appeared as coolies, joined the coolie and refugee throng moving on and off ship, and disappeared one by one. It was brilliantly planned and executed, agents being picked up from unobtrusive assembly points throughout the metropolis. Lt Andrews made the plans and carried out the movement under the supervision of Major Allen. The ship took the Hao agents, in compartmented groups, to an overseas point, the first stage in a movement to a secret training area. . . .

f. December 1954

... discussions between the U.S., Vietnamese and French had reached a point where it appeared that a military training mission using U.S. officers was in the immediate offing. General O'Daniel had a U.S.-French planning group working on the problem, under Col. Rosson. One paper they were developing was a plan for pacification of Vietminh and dissident areas; this paper was passed to SMM for its assistance with the drafting. SMM wrote much of the paper, changing the concept from the old rigid police controls of all areas to some of our concepts of winning over the population and instituting a classification of areas by the amount of trouble in each, the amount of control required, and fixing responsibilities between civil and military authorities. With a few changes, this was issued by President Diem on 31 December as the National Security Action (Pacification) Directive. . . .

There was still much disquiet in Vietnam, particularly among anti-Communist political groups who were not included in the government. SMM officers were contacted by a number of such groups who felt that they "would have to commit suicide in 1956" (the 1956 plebiscite promised in the 1954 Geneva agreement), when the Vietminh would surely take over against so weak a government. One group of farmers and militia in the south was talked out of

migrating to Madagascar by SMM and staying on their farms. A number of these groups asked SMM for help in training personnel for eventual guerrilla warfare if the Vietminh won. Persons such as the then Minister of Defense and Trinh Minh The were among those loyal to the government who also requested such help. It was decided that a more basic guerrilla training program might be undertaken for such groups than was available at the secret training site to which we had sent the Binh and Hao groups. Plans were made with Major Bohanan and Mr. John C. Wachtel in the Philippines for a solution of this problem; the United States backed the development, through them, of a small Freedom Company training camp in a hidden valley on the Clark AFB reservation.

Till and Peg Durdin of the N. Y. Times, Hank Lieberman of the N. Y. Times, Homer Bigart of the N. Y. Herald-Tribune, John Meeklin of Life-Times, and John Roderick of Associated Press, have been warm friends of SMM and worked hard to penetrate the fabric of French propaganda and give the U.S. an objective account of events in Vietnam. The group met with us at times to analyze objectives and motives of propaganda known to them, meeting at their own request as U.S. citizens. These mature and responsible news correspondents performed a valuable service for their country. . . .

g. January 1955

The Vietminh long ago had adopted the Chinese Communist thought that the people are the water and the army is the fish. Vietminh relations with the mass of the population during the fighting had been exemplary, with a few exceptions; in contrast, the Vietnamese National Army had been like too many Asian armies, adept at cowering a population into feeding them, providing them with girls. SMM had been working on this problem from the beginning. Since the National Army was the only unit of government with a strong organization throughout the country and with good communications, it was the key to stabilizing the situation quickly on a nation-wide basis. If Army and people could be brought together into a team, the first strong weapon against Communism could be forged.

The Vietminh were aware of this. We later learned that months before the signing of the Geneva Agreement they had been planning for action in the post-Geneva period; the National Army was to be the primary target for subversion efforts, it was given top priority by the Central Committee for operations against its enemy, and about 100 superior cadres were retrained for the operations and placed in the [words illegible] organization for the work, which commenced even before the agreement was signed. We didn't know it at the time, but this was SMM's major opponent, in a secret struggle for the National Army. . . .

General O'Daniel was anticipating the culmination of long negotiations to permit U.S. training of the Vietnamese Armed Forces, against some resistance on the part of French groups. In January, negotiations were proceeding so well that General O'Daniel informally organized a combined U.S.-French training mission which eventually became known as the Training Relations & Instruction Mission (TRIM) under his command, but under the overall command of the top French commander, General Paul Ely.

The French had asked for top command of half the divisions in the TRIM staff. Their first priority was for command of the division supervising National Security Action by the Vietnamese, which could be developed into a continuation of strong French control of key elements of both Army and population. In conferences with Ambassador Collins and General O'Daniel, it was decided to transfer Colonel Lansdale to the Ambassador's staff to TRIM, to head the National Security division.

Colonel Lansdale requested authority to coordinate all U.S. civil and military efforts in this National Security work. On 11 January, Ambassador Collins announced the change to the country team, and gave him authority to coordinate this work among all U.S. agencies in Vietnam. . . .

President Diem had continued requesting SMM help with the guard battalion for the Presidential Palace. We made arrangements with President Mag saysay in the Philippines and borrowed his senior aide and military advisor, Col. Napoleon Valeriano, who had a fine combat record against the Communist Huks and also had reorganized the Presidential Guard Battalion for Mag saysay. Valeriano, with three junior officers, arrived in January and went to work on Diem's guard battalion. Later, selected Vietnamese officers were trained with the Presidential Guards in Manila. An efficient unit gradually emerged. Diem was warmly grateful for this help by Filipinos who also continuously taught our concept of loyalty and freedom.

The patriot we've named Trieu Dinh had been working on an almanac for popular sale, particularly in the northern cities and towns we could still reach. Noted Vietnamese astrologers were hired to write predictions about coming disasters to certain Vietminh leaders and undertakings, and to predict unity in the south. The work was carried out under the direction of Lt Phillips, based on our concept of the use of astrology for psywar in Southeast Asia. Copies of the almanac were shipped by air to Haiphong and then smuggled into Vietminh territory.

Dinh also had produced a Thomas Paine type series of essays on Vietnamese patriotism against the Communist Vietminh, under the guidance of Capt. Arundel. These essays were circulated among influential groups in Vietnam, earned front-page editorials in the leading daily newspaper in Saigon. Circulation increased with the publication of these essays. The publisher is known to SMM as The Dragon Lady and is a fine Vietnamese girl who has been the mistress of an anti-American French civilian. Despite anti-American remarks by her boy friend, we had helped her keep her paper from being closed by the government . . . and she found it profitable to heed our advice on the editorial content of her paper.

Arms and equipment for the Binh paramilitary team were being cached in the north in areas still free from the Vietminh. Personnel movements were covered by the flow of refugees. Haiphong was reminiscent of our own pioneer days as it was swamped with people whom it couldn't shelter. Living space and food were at a premium, nervous tension grew. It was a wild time for our northern team.

First supplies for the Hao paramilitary group started to arrive in Saigon. These shipments and the earlier ones for the Binh group were part of an efficient and effective air smuggling effort by the 581st [word illegible] Wing, U.S. Air Force, to support SMM with help

L. CIA and Air Force personnel in both Okinawa and the Philippines. SMM officers frequently did coolie labor in manhandling tons of cargo, at times working throughout the night. . . . All . . . officers pitched in to help, as part of our "blood, sweat and tears". . . .

By 31 January, all operational equipment of the Binh paramilitary group had been trans-shipped to Haiphong from Saigon, mostly with the help of CAT, and the northern SMM team had it cached in operational sites. Security measures were tightened at the Haiphong airport and plans for bringing in the Hao equipment were changed from the air route to sea. Task Force 98, now 98.7 under command of Captain Frank, again was asked to give a helping hand and did so. . . .

Major Conein had briefed the members of the Binh paramilitary team and started them infiltrating into the north as individuals. The infiltration was carried out in careful stages over a 30 day period, a successful operation. The Linhs became normal citizens, carrying out every day civil pursuits, on the surface.

We had smuggled into Vietnam about eight and a half tons of supplies for the Hao paramilitary group. They included fourteen agent radios, 300 carbines, 90,000 rounds of carbine ammunition, 50 pistols, 10,000 rounds of pistol ammunition, and 300 pounds of explosives. Two and a half tons were delivered to the Hao agents in Tonkin, while the remainder was cached along the Red River by SMM, with the help of the Navy. . . .

Other Events Of the Period

April 12, 1945—Roosevelt dies.
May 8, 1945—War in Europe ends.
Aug. 6, 1945—Atom bomb dropped on Hiroshima.
Aug. 14, 1945—Japan surrenders.
Jan. 10, 1946—First U.N. General Assembly opens.
Nov. 2, 1948—Truman elected.
Dec. 7, 1949—Communists complete take-over of China.
June 25, 1950—North Korean troops invade South Korea.
Nov. 1, 1952—First U.S. hydrogen bomb explosion.
Nov. 4, 1952—Eisenhower elected.
March 5, 1953—Stalin dies.
July 27, 1953—Korean war armistice.
Aug. 12, 1953—Soviet Union explodes first H-bomb.
Sept. 8, 1954—SEATO Pact signed.
July 18-23, 1955—Summit meeting, Geneva.
Oct. 23, 1956—Hungarian uprising begins.
Oct. 29, 1956—Suez Invasion.
Nov. 6, 1956—Eisenhower re-elected.
Oct. 4, 1957—Soviet Union launches Sputnik I.
July 15, 1958—U. S. Marines in Lebanon.
Jan. 1, 1959—Castro takes power in Cuba.
Sept. 15-27, 1959—Khrushchev visits U. S.
Nov. 8, 1960—Kennedy elected.

j. April 1955

the Hao paramilitary team had finished its training at the secret training site and been flown by the Air Force to a holding site in the Philippines, where Major Allen and his officers briefed the paramilitary team. In mid-April, they were taken by the Navy to Haiphong, where they were gradually slipped ashore. Meanwhile, arms and other equipment including explosives were being flown into Saigon via our smuggling route, being readied for shipment north by the Navy task force handling refugees. The White team office gradually became an imposing munitions depot. Nightly shootings and bombings in restless Saigon caused us to give them dispersed storage behind thick walls as far as this one big house would permit. SMM personnel guarded the house night and day, for it also contained our major files other than the working file at our Command Post.

All files were fixed for instant destruction, automatic weapons and hand grenades distributed to all personnel. It was a strange scene for new personnel just arriving. . . .

Haiphong was taken over by the Vietminh on 16 May. Our Binh and northern Hao teams were in place, completely equipped. It had taken a tremendous amount of hard work to beat the Geneva deadline, to locate, select, exfiltrate, train, infiltrate, equip the men of these two teams and have them in place, ready, for actions required against the enemy. It would be a hard task to do openly, but this had to be kept secret from the Vietminh, the International Commission with its suspicious French and Poles and Indians, and even friendly Vietnamese. Movements of personnel and supplies had had to be over thousands of miles. . . .

Vietnam Papers: Doubt Cast on View That the North Imposed War on the South

Under the heading "Origins of the Insurgency in South Vietnam," the Pentagon's study analyzes the Vietcong movement and its role in the development of the war. The following article, by Fox Butterfield, describes the analysts' findings.

The secret Pentagon study of the Vietnam war says the United States Government's official view that the war was imposed on South Vietnam by aggression from Hanoi is "not wholly compelling."

Successive administrations in Washington, from President John F. Kennedy to President Richard M. Nixon, have used this interpretation of the origins of the war to justify American intervention in Vietnam. But American intelligence estimates during the nineteen-fifties show, the Pentagon account says, that the war began largely as a rebellion in the South against the increasingly oppressive and corrupt regime of Ngo Dinh Diem.

"Most of those who took up arms were South Vietnamese and the causes for which they fought were by no means contrived in North Vietnam," the Pentagon account says of the years from 1956 to 1959, when the insurgency began.

But the study also disputes many critics of American policy in Vietnam who have contended that North Vietnam became involved in the South only after 1965 in response to large-scale American intervention.

"It is equally clear that North Vietnamese Communists operated some form of subordinate apparatus in the South in the years 1954-1960," the Pentagon study says.

And in 1959, the account continues, Hanoi made a clear decision to assert its control over the growing insurgency and to increase its infiltration of trained cadres from the North. Thereafter, the study says, "Hanoi's involvement in the developing strife became evident."

Authoritarian, Inflexible, Remote

Developments related to the origins of the war that are disclosed by the Pentagon history include the following:

American officials in Saigon, including those in the embassy, the Central Intelligence Agency and the military command were fully aware of President Diem's shortcomings. They regularly reported to Washington that he was "authoritarian, inflexible and remote," that he entrusted power only to his own family and that he had alienated all elements of the population by his oppressive policies.

From 1954 to 1958 North Vietnam concentrated on its internal development, apparently hoping to achieve reunification either through

provided for in the Geneva settlement or through the natural collapse of the weak Diem regime. The Communists left behind a skeletal apparatus in the South when they regrouped to North Vietnam in 1954 after the war with the French ended, but the cadre members were ordered to engage only in "political struggle."

In the years before 1959 the Diem regime was nearly successful in wiping out the agents, who felt constrained by their orders not to fight back. Their fear and anger at being caught in this predicament, however, apparently led them to begin the insurgency against Mr. Diem, despite their orders, sometime during 1956-57.

North Vietnam's leaders formally decided in May, 1959, at the 15th meeting of the Lao Dong (Communist) party's Central Committee, to take control of the growing insurgency. Captured Vietcong personnel and documents report that as a result of the decision the Ho Chi Minh Trail of supply lines was prepared, southern cadre members who had been taken North were infiltrated back to the South and the tempo of the war suddenly speeded up.

The Pentagon account says that both American intelligence and Vietcong prisoners attributed the Vietcong's rapid success after 1959 to the Diem regime's mistakes.

In a report prepared by the Rand Corporation of Santa Monica, Calif., on the interrogation of 23 Vietcong cadre members, one southern member said of the Communists' success:

"The explanation is not that the cadre were exceptionally gifted but the people they talked to were ready for rebellion. The people were like a mound of straw, ready to be ignited."

"If at that time the Government in the South had been a good one, if it had not been dictatorial, then launching the movement would have been difficult."

Encouragement of Hanoi Is Seen

A United States intelligence estimate of August, 1960, on the rapidly deteriorating situation in South Vietnam concluded:

"The indications of increasing dissatisfaction with the Diem government have probably encouraged the Hanoi regime to take stronger action at this time."

To emphasize how the Diem regime's oppressive and corrupt policies helped prepare the way for the insurgency in South Vietnam, the Pentagon study devotes a lengthy section to Mr. Diem's rule—as Premier from 1954 until late 1955 and then as President until he was overthrown in 1963.

When Mr. Diem took office in 1954, the account notes, it seemed for a while

To the surprise of most observers, he put down the Binh Xuyen gangster sect in Saigon and the Cao Dai and the Hoa Hao, armed sects in the countryside. He created a stable government and a loyal army where there had been only chaos. And he won diplomatic recognition for South Vietnam from many countries.

But from the beginning, the account says, President Diem's personality and political concepts tended to decrease his Government's effectiveness.

The product of a family that was both zealously Roman Catholic and a member of the traditional Mandarin ruling class, Mr. Diem was authoritarian, moralistic, inflexible, bureaucratic and suspicious. His mentality is described in the account as like that of a "Spanish Inquisitor."

His political machine was a "rigidly organized, overcentralized family oligarchy." He trusted only his family members, particularly his brother Ngo Dinh Nhu, who had organized the semi-secret Can Lao party.

Chose to Rule 'With Firm Hand'

An American intelligence estimate of May, 1959, described the situation as follows:

"President Diem continues to be the undisputed ruler of South Vietnam; all important and many minor decisions are referred to him.

"Although he professes to believe in representative government and democracy, Diem is convinced that the Vietnamese are not ready for such a political system and that he must rule with a firm hand, at least so long as nation security is threatened:

"He also believes that the country cannot afford a political opposition which could obstruct or dilute the Government's efforts to establish a strong rule. He remains a somewhat austere and remote figure to most Vietnamese and has not generated widespread popular enthusiasm."

"Diem's regime reflects his ideas. A facade of representative government is maintained, but the Government is in fact essentially authoritarian."

"The legislative powers of the National Assembly are strictly circumscribed; the judiciary is undeveloped and subordinate to the executive; and the members of the executive branch are little more than the personal agents of Diem."

"No organized opposition, loyal or otherwise, is tolerated, and critics of the regime are often repressed."

To make matters worse, according to the account, Mr. Diem's programs designed to increase security in the countryside were carried out so badly that they "drove a wedge not between the insurgents and the farmers, but between the farmers and the Government, and eventually in less rather than more security."

The Civic Action program, designed to help the Government in Saigon establish communication with the peasants, went astray when President Diem used northern refugees and Catholics almost exclusively to go into the villages. To the peasants these Civic Action team members were outsiders.

The Diem land-reform program, instead of redistributing land to the poor, ended up taking back what the peasants had been given by the Vietminh and returning it to the landlords. In 1960, 75 per cent of the land was still owned by 15 per cent of the people.

Mr. Diem abolished the traditional elected village councils out of fear that Communists might gain power in them. Then he replaced these popular bodies with appointed outsiders, northern refugees and Catholics loyal to him.

In the so-called anti-Communist denunciation campaign, which was begun in the summer of 1955, from 50,000 to 100,000 people were put in detention camps. But, the account says, many of the detainees were not Communists at all.

President Diem also ordered a number of population-relocation programs to increase security, but these too backfired, it says.

Montagnard tribesmen who were forced to leave their traditional homelands in the Central Highlands for more settled and secure areas made easy recruits for the Vietcong, the chronicle relates, and peasants who were forced to move out of their ancestral villages and build new ones in the so-called agrovile program resented the Saigon Government.

Despite "Diem's preoccupation with security," the account says, "he poorly provided for police and intelligence in the countryside"; the Self-Defense Corps and Civil Guard—both militia groups—were "poorly trained and equipped, miserably led."

"Their brutality, petty thievery and disorderliness induced innumerable villagers to join in open revolt against Diem," the account continues.

By curbing freedom of speech and jailing dissidents, the history says, Mr. Diem alienated the intellectuals; by promoting officers on the basis of loyalty to his family rather than on the basis of ability, he alienated large segments of the armed forces.

Looking at the Diem Government's growing problems in January, 1960, the United States Embassy concluded in a "Special Report on the Internal Security Situation in Vietnam":

"The situation may be summed up in the fact that the Government has tended to treat the population with suspicion or to coerce it and has been rewarded with an attitude of apathy and resentment.

"The basic factor which has been lacking is a feeling of rapport between the Government and the population. The people have not identified themselves with the Government."

The report pointed to this "growth of apathy and considerable dissatisfaction among the rural populace" as a major cause of the insurgency.

Political Struggle'

The Pentagon study divides the development of the insurgency in South Vietnam into roughly three periods:

From 1954 to 1956 the country enjoyed relative quiet as Communist cadres left behind in the South devoted themselves to "political struggle." From 1956 to 1958, after President Diem's rejection of the scheduled elections, dissident cadres in the South began the insurgency. With Hanoi's decision to take over the insurgency in 1959, the third period, that of full-scale war, began.

When Ho Chi Minh established his capital in Hanoi after the Geneva conference in 1954, American intelligence reported that North Vietnam's new leaders could be expected to concentrate on building their war-ravaged and primitive economy.

According to the American information, the Communists had taken with them 90,000 armed men from the South, leaving 5,000 to 10,000 armed men behind as a "skeletal apparatus."

From captured documents, American intelligence officials believed that the "stay-behind cadres" had the main task of preparing for the elections scheduled for 1956 to reunify the country. The cadre members were ordered to carry out only "political struggle," which meant largely propaganda activity and infiltration of the Saigon Government.

Election Victory Was Expected

A document captured early in 1955 from a Communist field organizer and sent to Washington by the Central Intelligence Agency warned that "it is not the time to meet the enemy." The Communists apparently believed, the study says, that they would get control of the country either through the elections or by the collapse of the Diem regime through its own weakness.

In 1956 the confidential Rand Corporation study of captured southern cadre members who originally went to the North in 1954 showed that most of them had expected that the Communists would win in the 1956 elections.

"Our political officer explained that we were granted Vietnam north of the 17th Parallel now, but in 1956 there would be a general election and we would regain the South and be reunited with our families," one captive reported.

"I was a political officer," another explained. "I went to the North just like all the other combatants in my unit. I believed, at the time, that regroupment was only temporary, because from the study sessions on the Geneva agreement we drew the conclusion that we could return to the South after the general election."

While there were some incidents of murder or kidnapping in the southern countryside from 1954 to 1956, they were not directly attributable to the Communist "stay-behinds," the account says.

A United States intelligence estimate of July, 1956, noted:

"During the past year the Communists in South Vietnam have remained generally quiescent. They have passed by a number of opportunities to embarrass the Diem regime.

"Although some cadres and supplies are being infiltrated across the 17th parallel, the D.R.V. [Democratic Republic of North Vietnam] probably has not sent any large-scale reinforcement or supply to the South."

Well-Informed on Attitudes

The American intelligence network in South Vietnam, though limited in size, was well informed of the Communists' attitudes and actions during this period, the study explains. An intelligence estimate in May, 1957, noted:

"Because the countrywide elections envisaged by the Geneva agreements have not been held and because military action has been prevented, the D.R.V. has been frustrated in its hopes of gaining control of SVN. This has caused some discontent among cadres evacuated from the South in the expectation that they would soon return."

Intelligence gathered from Communist agents and documents captured in the nineteen-sixties, when the American intelligence network had expanded, filled out this picture of frustration and disillusionment among the cadre members.

A captured Communist who had been in charge of propaganda in Saigon testified: "The period from the armistice of 1954 until 1958 was the darkest time for the Vietcong in South Vietnam. The political agitation policy proposed by the Communist party could not be carried out due to the arrest of a number of party members."

Another cadre member reported: "The cadres who had remained behind in the South had almost all been arrested. Only one or two cadres were left in every three to five villages."

Efficiently Destroyed Our Party

A document that appears to be a party history, captured in 1966 by the United States First Infantry Division during a sweep through the area called the Iron Triangle near Saigon, described the cadres' predicament. Noting that the Diem Government's harsh security policies had "truly and efficiently destroyed our party," the document referring to the scheduled date for the elections said:

"Particularly after 20 July 1956, the key cadres and party members in South Vietnam asked questions which demanded answers:

"Can we still continue the struggle to demand the implementation of the Geneva agreement given the existing regime in South Vietnam? If not, what must be done? A mood of skepticism and nonconfidence in the orientation of the struggle began to seep into the party apparatus and among some of the masses."

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For some cadres, the document said, the answer was "armed struggle" despite their orders. It continued:

"The situation truly ripened for an armed movement against the enemy. But the leadership of the Nam Bo Regional Committee [then the Vietcong's headquarters for the southern part of South Vietnam] at that time still hesitated for many reasons, but the principal reason was the fear of violating the party line.

"The majority of party members and cadres felt that it was necessary to immediately launch an armed struggle in order to preserve the movement and protect the forces. In several areas the

party members on their own initiative had organized armed struggle against the enemy."

According to the Pentagon account, the result of the cadres' decision to begin armed struggle was soon apparent in Saigon.

American intelligence officers in Saigon estimated that 30 armed terrorist incidents were initiated in the last quarter of 1957, with at least 75 local officials assassinated or kidnapped. On Oct. 22, 13 Americans were wounded in three bombings in Saigon.

But, the account says, "there is only sparse evidence that North Vietnam was directing, or was capable of directing, that violence."

During this period, from 1956 to 1958, the party leaders in Hanoi were engaged in "a serious reconsideration" of their policy, the account says.

Sometime early in 1957 Le Duan, a southerner who had led the fight in the South during the French Indochina war, returned to Hanoi from a two-year stay in the South, carrying news that the struggle there was going badly. According to American intelligence reports, he told the Politburo that it was wasting time with its orders for "political struggle." He was said to have urged military pressure.

Most Powerful Man in Hanoi

Mr. Duan, the study notes, was named a member of the Politburo later that same year, and in September, 1960, he became the First Secretary of the party.

The futility of their policy must have been brought home to the leaders in Hanoi according to the study, when on Jan. 24, 1957, the Soviet Union proposed the admission of both North and South Vietnam to the United Nations.

But until 1958 North Vietnam was still primarily concerned with its internal development, the account says, especially during 1956, when there was a peasant revolt against the Communists' harsh land-reform program.

In December, 1958, or January, 1959, the study continues, "Hanoi apparently decided that the time had come to intensify its efforts."

American intelligence quickly picked up clues about this decision.

The C.I.A. came into possession of a directive from Hanoi to its headquarters for the Central Highlands during December, 1958, stating that the Lao Dong party's Central Committee had decided to "open a new stage

Received a copy of an order directing the establishment of two guerrilla operations bases, one in Tayninh Province near the Cambodian border and another in the western Central Highlands.

The C.I.A. also learned at this time that Mr. Duan was making a secret visit to the South.

The decision that had been made privately by the Politburo was formally ratified by the Central Committee at its 15th meeting in May, 1959. All available evidence suggests that this was "the point of departure for D.R.V. intervention," the narrative says.

Scholars and journalists who have studied the origins of the insurgency, but who have not had access to American intelligence reports, have not attached such significance to that 15th session.

The United States Embassy in Saigon, reporting to Washington on the Central Committee decision, noted that a resolution had been passed saying that the struggle for reunification would have to be carried out by "all appropriate measures other than peaceful," the embassy reported.

The document captured by the First Infantry Division recalled the 1959 decision:

"After the resolution of the 15th plenum of the Central Committee was issued, all of South Vietnam possessed a clear and correct strategic policy and orientation.

The directive of the Politburo in May, 1959, stated that the time had come to push the armed struggle. Thanks to this we closely followed the actual situation in order to formulate a program, and in October, 1959, the armed struggle was launched."

Special Training for Tribesmen

A rapid build-up of Hanoi's potential for infiltration followed the party's decision to take a more active role in the insurgency, the analyst says.

Infiltration from North Vietnam had actually begun as early as 1955, United States intelligence reports show, but only in 1959 did the C.I.A. pick up evidence of large-scale infiltration.

To operate the infiltration trails, a group of montagnard tribesmen from Quangtri and Thuathien Provinces were given special training in North Vietnam in 1958 and 1959.

Early in 1959 also, the C.I.A. reported, Hanoi formed "special border crossing teams" composed of southerners who went to the North in 1954. Their mission was to carry food, drugs and other supplies down the trail network.

And in April, 1959, the C.I.A. learned, the 559th Transportation Group was established directly under the party's Central Committee as a headquarters in charge of infiltration.

Large training centers for infiltrators were reportedly established early in 1960 at Xuanmai and Sontay, near Hanoi. During 1959 and 1960, United States intelligence officials estimated, 26 groups of infiltrators, totaling 4,500 people, made the trip south.

From later interrogation of captured infiltrators, United States intelligence

1964 almost all the infiltrators were native southerners who went to the North in 1954.

A Rand Corporation study of 71 of the infiltrators showed that two out of three were members of the Lao Dong party; that they had all undergone extensive periods of training in North Vietnam before being sent south; and that most of them were officers, senior noncommissioned officers or party cadre members.

Big Rise in Assassinations Noted

Hanoi's decision to switch from "political struggle" to "armed struggle" was rapidly reflected in a rise in terrorist attacks in South Vietnam during the second half of 1959, the Pentagon study says.

The United States Embassy, in a Special Report on the Internal Security Situation in Vietnam in January, 1960, noted that while there were 193 assassinations in all of 1958, there were 119 assassinations in the last four months of 1959 alone.

Even more alarming, the embassy said, were Vietcong attacks for the first time on large South Vietnamese Army units. A Vietcong ambush of two companies of Saigon's 23d Division on Sept. 26, 1959, with the killing of 12 Government soldiers and the loss of most of their weapons, brought home "the full impact of the seriousness of the present situation."

The stepped-up insurgency led to the first American deaths of the war in South Vietnam. On July 8, 1959, a terrorist bomb inside the Bienhoia base compound killed two United States servicemen.

In its January, 1960, report on the deteriorating situation, the embassy also passed on to Washington two comments made by the North Vietnamese Premier, Pham Van Dong, which it considered significant:

First: "You must remember we will be in Saigon tomorrow, we will be in Saigon tomorrow." These words were spoken by Premier Pham Van Dong in a conversation with French Consul Georges-Picot on Sept. 12, 1959.

And second: "In November, Pham Van Dong twice told Canadian Commissioner Erichsen-Brown that 'We will drive the Americans into the sea.'" The Canadian, a representative on the International Control Commission, was stationed in Hanoi.

The National Liberation Front for South Vietnam was officially founded on Dec. 20, 1960, the study relates, and within a year its membership had quadrupled to 300,000. By then the insurgency had taken root.

Leaders of the Insurgency

Le Duan

Vietcong organizer, nineteen-fifties; Secretary, Lao Dong (Communist) party Central Committee for the Southern Region 1956; Secretary General Lao Dong party, 1959; since 1960, First Secretary of party . . . born into peasant family, Quangtri province in central Vietnam, 1908 . . . worked as secretary with railways, Hanoi . . . given 20-year prison term for subversive activities, 1930 . . . released 1936, resumed political work for Indochinese Communist Party . . . given 10-year sentence, 1940 . . . released on Vietminh take-over 1945 . . . led guerrillas against French in South starting 1946 . . . commissioner at Vietminh's military headquarters in South, 1952 . . . rose in party, named First Secretary, September, 1960 . . . led Hanoi delegation to 1957 50th-anniversary celebrations in Moscow . . . since Ho Chi Minh's death, has emerged as "first among equals" in collective leadership . . . has sponsored popular economic reforms . . . advocates "protracted war" strategy . . . said to be self-effacing, pragmatic . . .

Pham Van Dong

Led Vietminh delegation to Geneva, 1954; in North Vietnam hierarchy thereafter and Premier since 1955 . . . born Quangngai, coastal region in South, 1906 . . . entered University of Hanoi, 1925 . . . led student strike, fled to China . . . joined Vietnamese political émigrés, including Ho Chi Minh, in Canton . . . sent back to Vietnam by Ho Chi Minh on secret mission . . . arrested, imprisoned on island of Poulo Condore, 1929-36 . . . worked to establish Communist movement in North and South . . . fled to south China, 1939 . . . with Ho Chi Minh and Vo Nguyen Giap, founded Vietminh, 1941; finance minister, 1945, in first Ho Chi Minh government . . . named chief negotiator with French at Fontainebleau, 1946 . . . premier, 1949 . . . guerrilla commander in Quangngai, 1951 . . . chief Geneva negotiator, 1954 . . . regarded as "the best nephew" of "Uncle" Ho Chi Minh called "my other self" by Ho . . . formulator of North Vietnam's "four points" for peace . . . sophisticated, articulate, a skilled diplomat.

Pentagon Papers: Eisenhower Decisions Undercut the Geneva Accords, Study Says

By FOX BUTTERFIELD

The secret Pentagon study of the Vietnam war discloses that a few days after the Geneva accords of 1954, the Eisenhower Administration's National Security Council decided that the accords were a "disaster" and the President approved actions to prevent further Communist expansion in Vietnam.

These White House decisions, the Pentagon account concludes, meant that the United States had "a direct role in the ultimate breakdown of the Geneva settlement."

That judgment contradicts the repeated assertion of several American administrations that North Vietnam alone was to blame for the undermining of the Geneva accords.

According to the Pentagon writer, the National Security Council, at a meeting on Aug. 8, 1954, just after the Geneva conference, ordered an urgent program of economic and military aid—substituting American advisers for French advisers—to the new South Vietnamese Government of Ngo Dinh Diem.

The objectives set by the Council were "to maintain a friendly non-Communist South Vietnam" and "to prevent a Communist victory through all-Vietnam elections."

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nam was to be temporarily divided into two zones pending reunification through elections scheduled for 1956. The introduction of foreign troops or bases and the use of Vietnamese territory for military purposes were forbidden. The United States, which did not join with the nations that endorsed the accords, issued a declaration taking note of the provisions and promising not to disturb them.

But a lengthy report, accompanying the Pentagon study, describes in detail how the Eisenhower Administration sent a team of agents to carry out clandestine warfare against North Vietnam from the minute the Geneva conference closed.

The team, headed by the legendary intelligence operative Col. Edward G. Lansdale, gave a graphic account of the actions it took just before evacuating Hanoi in October 1954. [See text, Lansdale team's report, Page 11.]

The report says the team "spent the last days of Hanoi in contaminating the oil supply of the bus company for a gradual wreckage of engines in the buses, in taking actions for delayed sabotage of the railroad (which required teamwork with a C.I.A. special technical team in Japan who performed their part brilliantly), and in writing detailed notes of potential targets for future para-military operations."

"U. S. adherence to the Geneva agreement," the authors of the report said, "prevented [the American team] from carrying out the active sabotage it desired to do against the power plant, water facilities, harbor and bridge."

"The team had a bad moment when contaminating the oil. They had to work quickly at night, in an enclosed storage room. Fumes from the contaminant came close to knocking them out. Dizzy and weak-kneed, they masked their

This is the ninth and last in a series of articles on the Pentagon's secret study of American participation in the Vietnam war. The study was obtained by The New York Times through the investigative reporting of Neil Sheehan. The series was researched and written over three months by Mr. Sheehan and other staff members. Three pages of documentary material begin on Page 9, and an accompanying article, on the study's analysis of the Vietcong insurgency, will be

Under the Geneva settlement, Viet-

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faces with handkerchiefs and completed the job."

The report is attributed to a hastily assembled group identified as the Saigon Military Mission. Its authors do not explain why they believed sabotage of buses and the railroad was allowed under the Geneva accords if sabotage of the power plant and harbor was forbidden.

The Pentagon study, which was commissioned by Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara to determine how the United States became involved in the Vietnam war, devotes nine lengthy sections to the nineteen-forties and fifties.

At key points during these years, the Pentagon study says, the Truman and Eisenhower Administrations made far-reaching decisions on Vietnam policy that the public knew little about or misunderstood. And by the time John F. Kennedy became President in 1961, the writers recount, the American Government already felt itself heavily committed to the defense of South Vietnam.

One of the earliest disclosures in the account is that in late 1945 and early 1946, Ho Chi Minh wrote at least eight letters to President Truman and the State Department requesting American help in winning Vietnam's independence from France. [See text, report of Ho's appeals, Feb. 2, 1946, Page 9.]

No Record of an Answer

The analyst says he could find no record that the United States ever answered Ho Chi Minh's letters. Nor has Washington ever revealed that it received the letters.

A key point came in the winter of 1949-50 when the United States made what the account describes as a watershed decision affecting American policy in Vietnam for the next two decades: After the fall of mainland China to the Chinese Communists, the Truman Administration moved to support Emperor Bao Dai and provide military aid to the French against the Communist-led Vietminh.

This decision, which was made amid growing concern in the United States over the expansion of Communism in Eastern Europe and Asia, reversed Washington's long-standing reluctance to become involved with French colonialism in Indochina.

With this action, the account says, "the course of U. S. policy was set to block further Communist expansion in Asia." And "the United States thereafter was directly involved in the developing tragedy in Vietnam."

Another key point came in the spring of 1954, the writer discloses, when the Eisenhower Administration twice strongly hinted to France that it was willing to intervene with American military forces to prevent French defeat in Indochina.

While some information has been made public about these proposals, the Pentagon study says that the public has not understood how seriously the Eisenhower Administration debated intervention.

Move for a Resolution

It adds that during the second episode, which occurred in May and June, 1954, while the Geneva conference was in session, President Dwight D. Eisenhower had aides draft a resolution requesting Congressional authority to commit American troops in Indochina.

The National Security Council was so opposed to France's negotiating an end to the war, the analyst relates, that "the President was urged to inform Paris that French acquiescence in a Communist take-over of Indochina would bear on its status as one of the Big Three" and that "U.S. aid to France would automatically cease."

Then in August, 1954, came the decision that the Pentagon account says determined United States policy toward Vietnam for the rest of the decade: The National Security Council launched its program of economic and military aid to Mr. Diem, then Premier and later President, though its action was not made public for months. [See text, report by special committee, April 5, 1954.]

The Pentagon account discloses that most of these major decisions from 1950 on were made against the advice of the American intelligence community.

Intelligence analysts in the Central Intelligence Agency, the State Department and sometimes the Pentagon repeatedly warned that the French, Emperor Bao Dai and Premier Diem were weak and unpopular and that the Communists were strong.

In early August, 1954, for example, just before the National Security Council decided to commit the United States to propping up Premier Diem, a national intelligence estimate warned:

"Although it is possible that the French and Vietnamese, even with firm support from the U.S. and other powers, may be able to establish a strong regime in South Vietnam, we believe that the chances for this development are poor and moreover, that the situation is more likely to continue to deteriorate progressively over the next year."

"Given the generally bleak appraisals of Diem's prospects, they who made U.S. policy could only have done so by assuming a significant measure of risk," the study says of the Eisenhower commitments.

The Pentagon study does not deal at length with a major question: Why did the policy-makers go ahead despite the intelligence estimates prepared by their most senior intelligence officials?

The most important reason advanced by the Pentagon study is that after the fall of China to the Communists in 1949 and the hardening of American anti-Communist attitudes, "Indochina's importance to U.S. security interests in the Far East was taken for granted."

The basic rationale for American involvement—what later came to be called the domino theory—was first clearly enunciated by the National Security Council in February, 1950, when it decided to extend military aid to the French in Indochina.

'Indochina is a Key Area'

"It is important to U.S. security interests," the Council said, "that all practicable measures be taken to prevent further Communist expansion in Southeast Asia. Indochina is a key area and is under immediate threat."

"The neighboring countries of Thailand and Burma could be expected to fall under Communist domination if Indochina is controlled by a Communist government. The balance of Southeast Asia would then be in grave hazard."

Subsequent Council decision papers throughout the nineteen-fifties repeated this formulation with ever-increasing sweep.

A Council paper approved by President Eisenhower in January, 1954, predicted that the "loss of any single country" in Southeast Asia would ultimately lead to the loss of all Southeast Asia, then India and Japan, and finally "endanger the stability and security of Europe."

"The domino theory and the assumptions behind it were never questioned," the Pentagon account says of the Eisenhower years. The result was that the Government's internal debate usually centered more on matters of military feasibility than on questions of basic national interests.

The Series So Far

Events before Tonkin incidents: Study says American-run covert war against North Vietnam preceded Tonkin Gulf clashes by months.

Planning the bombing: After Tonkin clashes, and before 1964 Presidential election, Johnson Administration planners reached "general consensus" favoring air war against North. Sustained bombing began in March, 1965.

Ground war begins: U.S. decided on offensive ground role after month of bombing failed to impede enemy. President Johnson ordered decision kept secret.

Kennedy years: Kennedy Administration's approval of covert warfare against North Vietnam in 1961 and "complicity" in ouster of President Diem deepened American involvement in Vietnam.

1965-66 troop build-up: Study links force expansion with U.S. planners' failure to anticipate enemy build-up. Air war was widened despite intelligence warnings that Hanoi's will could not be broken by raids.

Disillusion in 1966-67: Defense Secretary McNamara urged bombing cutback in October, 1966, and favored accepting Saigon coalition in May, 1967, becoming leader of "disillusioned doves" who tried to reverse U.S. course.

Turnabout, 1968: Amid shock of enemy's Tet offensive—with military privately reporting sweeping damage—generals tried to force President Johnson into major mobilization and drive for victory. Resulting policy clash brought on U.S. decision to de-escalate.

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continued

U.S. Policy in 'Disarray'

The Pentagon study, which begins its account of American involvement in Vietnam with World War II, says that American policy from 1940 to 1950 has been a subject of "significant misunderstanding."

American policy toward Vietnam during these years, the study says, was "less purposeful" than most people have assumed, and more characterized by "ambivalence and indecision."

President Franklin D. Roosevelt, the writer relates, never made up his mind whether to support the French desire to reclaim their Indochina colonies from the Japanese at the end of the war.

And at his death, American policy toward Indochina was in "disarray," the writer says.

He recounts that at first the Truman Administration had no clear-cut reaction to the conflict that broke out in 1945 and 1946 between the French and the Vietminh and eventually led to full-scale war. American policy, he adds, remained "ambivalent."

In a cablegram still kept secret in State Department files, Secretary of State George C. Marshall described the Government's quandary to the embassy in Paris:

"We have fully recognized France's foreign position and we do not wish to have it appear that we are in any way endeavoring to undermine that position."

"At same time we cannot shut our eyes to fact there are two sides this problem and that our reports indicate both a lack of French understanding other side and continued existence dangerously outmoded colonial outlook and method in areas."

Dual Rejection of Plans

"On other hand we do not lose sight fact that Ho Chi Minh has direct Communist connections and it should be obvious that we are not interested in seeing colonial empire administrations supplanted by philosophy and political organization directed from and controlled by Kremlin."

"Frankly we have no solution of problem to suggest."

On this reasoning, the Truman Government refused French requests for American planes and ships to transport French troops to Indochina and similarly turned down appeals for American arms to help fight the Vietminh.

But the Truman Administration also rebuffed the appeals from Ho Chi Minh. In August and September, 1945, the account relates, while his forces were in control of Hanoi, he sent a request to President Truman through the Office of Strategic Services, precursor of the C.I.A., asking that Vietnam be accorded "the same status as the Philippines" for a period of tutelage pending independence.

From October, 1945, until the following February, the account continues, Ho Chi Minh wrote at last eight letters to President Truman or to the Secretary of State, formally appealing for United States and United Nations intervention against French colonialism.

There is no record, the analyst says, that any of the appeals were answered.

"Non-intervention by the United States on behalf of the Vietnamese was tantamount to acceptance of the French," the Pentagon account declares.

In 1948 and 1949, as concern about the Soviet Union's expansion in Eastern Europe grew in the United States, Washington became increasingly anxious about Ho Chi Minh's Communist affiliations. Nevertheless, the account discloses, a survey by the State Department's Office of Intelligence and Research in the fall of 1948 concluded that it could not find any hard evidence that Ho Chi Minh actually took his orders from Moscow.

An Anomaly So Far

"If there is a Moscow-directed conspiracy in Southeast Asia, Indochina is an anomaly so far," the study reported in its evaluation section.

With its growing concern about Communism, Washington began to press Paris harder to give more independence to the Indochina states. The American Government thus hoped to encourage Vietnamese popular support for Bao Dai as a non-Communist alternative to Ho Chi Minh and his Vietminh.

Yet, the narrative relates, even when in March, 1949, France did agree with Emperor Bao Dai to grant Vietnam independence within the French Union, the Truman Administration continued to withhold its backing, fearful that Bao Dai was still weak and tainted with French colonialism.

In a cablegram to the Paris embassy, the State Department outlined its concern:

"We cannot at this time irretrievably commit the U. S. to support of a native government which by failing to develop appeal among Vietnamese might become virtually a puppet government separated from the people and existing only by the presence of French military forces."

But when Mao Tse-tung's armies drove Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek out of China in late 1949, Washington's ambivalence ended dramatically.

On Dec. 30 President Truman approved a key National Security Council study on Asia, designated N.S.C. 48/2. With it, the Pentagon study says, "The course of U. S. policy was set to block further Communist expansion in Asia."

Varied Forms of Assistance

"The United States on its own initiative," the document declared, should now scrutinize closely the development

of the "from Communist aggression, direct or indirect, and be prepared to help within our means to meet such threats by providing political, economic and military assistance and advice where clearly needed to supplement the resistance of other governments in and out of the area which are more directly concerned."

The Council document concluded that "particular attention should be given to the problem of French Indochina."

The basic policy decisions having been made, the Pentagon account relates, developments followed swiftly.

When Peking and Moscow recognized Ho Chi Minh's Democratic Republic of Vietnam in January, 1950, Washington followed by recognizing Bao Dai that Feb. 7.

Nine days later, the French requested military aid for the war in Indochina. Secretary of State Dean Acheson, in recommending a favorable reply, wrote in a memorandum to President Truman:

"The choice confronting the U. S. is to support the legal governments in Indochina or to face the extension of Communism over the remainder of the continental area of Southeast Asia and possibly westward."

On May 8, Washington announced that it would provide economic and military aid to the French in Indochina, beginning with a grant of \$16-million.

The first step had been taken. "The U. S. thereafter was directly involved in the developing tragedy in Vietnam," the account says.

Ultimately, the American military aid program reached \$1.1-billion in 1954, paying for 78 per cent of the French war burden.

Brink of Intervention

In the spring of 1954, as the French military position in Indochina deteriorated rapidly and the date for the Geneva conference approached, the Eisenhower Administration twice hinted to France that it was ready to intervene with American forces.

The Pentagon study contends that while some information about these two episodes has become public, the American people have never been told how seriously the Eisenhower inner circle debated intervening.

"The record shows plainly," the analyst says, "that the U. S. did seriously consider intervention and advocated it to the U. K. and other allies."

The first of these episodes, during March and April before the fall of the French fortress at Dienbienphu, was disclosed not long afterward by American journalists. But the story of the second, in May and early June while the Geneva conference was in session, has never been fully revealed. Mr. Eisenhower himself, in his 1963 book "Mandate for Change," mentioned the

second debate over intervention but gave only a sketchy account and did not report asking Secretary of State John Foster Dulles to draft a Congressional resolution.

The Eisenhower Administration felt intervention might be necessary, the study says, because without American help the French were likely to negotiate a "sellout" at Geneva to escape an unpopular war.

The Loss 'Would Be Critical'

As early as August, 1953, the National Security Council decided that American policy should be that "under present conditions any negotiated settlement would mean the eventual loss to Communism not only of Indochina but of the whole of Southeast Asia. The loss of Indochina would be critical to the security of the U.S."

The Eisenhower Administration stated its opposition to a negotiated settlement most fully in an N.S.C. paper, "United States Position on Indochina to be Taken at Geneva," late in April in the week the conference opened.

It was at this point, according to the study, that the Council urged President Eisenhower "to inform Paris that French acquiescence in a Communist take-over of Indochina would bear on its status as one of the Big Three" and that "U. S. aid to France would automatically cease."

In addition, the Council's policy paper said that the United States should consider continuing the war itself, with the Indochina states, if France negotiated an unsatisfactory settlement. America's goal should be nothing short of a "military victory," the Council said.

The President Decides

The Government's internal record shows, the study says, that while Secretary Dulles and Adm. Arthur W. Radford, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, pushed hard for intervention, other service chiefs, particularly Gen. Matthew B. Ridgway of the Army, were more cautious. They remembered the bitter and protracted experience in Korea and were not eager to repeat it.

President Eisenhower finally reached a decision against intervention on April 4 after a meeting of Mr. Dulles and Admiral Radford with Congressional leaders the previous day showed that the Congress would not support American action without allied help.

As journalists wrote, at the time, the President felt he must have Congressional approval before he committed American troops, and the Congressional leaders insisted on allied participation, especially by Britain.

At the very time the President was reaching this conclusion, Ambassador Douglas Dillon in Paris was cabling that the French had requested the "immediate armed intervention of U.S. carrier aircraft at Dienbienphu." [See text, Dillon cable, April 5, 1954.]

Mr. Dillon noted that the French had been prompted to make the request because they had been told by Admiral Radford that "he would do his best to obtain such help from the U.S. Government."

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Moreover, the President's decision of April 4, contrary to what was written at the time, was only tentative. The debate on intervention was still very much alive, the Pentagon account says.

In fact, the following day, April 5, the National Security Council, in an action paper, concluded:

"On balance, it appears that the U.S. should now reach a decision whether or not to intervene with combat forces if that is necessary to save Indochina from Communist control, and tentatively the form and conditions of any such intervention."

On May 7, with the news that Dienbienphu had just fallen and with the delegates already in Geneva, President Eisenhower met with Mr. Dulles in the White House to again consider intervention.

'U.S. Will Go to Congress'

According to a memorandum by Robert Cutler, the President's executive assistant, they discussed how "the U.S. should (as a last act to save Indochina) propose to France" that if certain conditions were met, "the U.S. will go to Congress for authority to intervene with combat forces." The words in parentheses appeared in the memorandum. [See text, memo of talk, April 7, 1954.]

Mr. Cutler noted that he explained to the President that some members of the Council's Planning Board "felt that it had never been made clear to the French that the United States was willing to ask for Congressional authority" if the preconditions were met.

Mr. Dulles said he would mention the subject to the French Ambassador, Henry Bonnet, that afternoon, "perhaps making a more broad hint than heretofore."

The preconditions included a call for the French to grant "genuine freedom" to the Indochina states—Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam.

They also stipulated that American advisers in Vietnam should "take major responsibility for training indigenous forces" and "share responsibility for military planning." American officers in Vietnam had long chafed under the limits on the role the French allowed them, the study says.

Participation by the British, who had shown themselves extremely reluctant to get involved, was no longer cited as a condition.

The French picked up Mr. Dulles's hint, and on May 10 Premier Joseph Laniel told Ambassador Dillon that France needed American intervention to save Indochina. That evening the President again met with Mr. Dulles, along with Admiral Radford and Secretary of Defense Charles E. Wilson, to discuss the French appeal.

Instructions For Dulles

During the meeting President Eisenhower directed Secretary Dulles to prepare a resolution that he could take before a joint meeting of Congress, requesting authority to commit American troops in Indochina.

From a document included in the

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cial on the draft Congressional resolution—it is clear that such a Congressional resolution was prepared and circulated in the State Department, the Justice Department and the Defense Department.

Although some historians have speculated that Vice President Richard M. Nixon strongly advocated American intervention in Indochina during these debates, the Pentagon study does not describe his views. Moreover, the account does not mention Mr. Nixon as a participant in any of the critical meetings at which intervention was discussed by the President, Secretary Dulles or Admiral Radford.

Both the State Department and the Defense Department then undertook what the account describes as "contingency planning" for possible intervention—the State Department drawing up a hypothetical timetable of diplomatic moves and the Defense Department preparing a memorandum on the U.S. forces that would be required.

The Joint Chiefs of Staff, in a memorandum to Secretary of Defense Wilson on May 20, recommended that the United States limit its involvement to "air and naval support directed from outside Indochina."

"From the point of view of the United States," the Joint Chiefs said, "Indochina is devoid of decisive military objectives and the allocation of more than token U.S. armed forces to that area would be a serious diversion of limited U.S. capabilities."

In the debates over intervention, the study says, advocates of American action advanced several novel ideas. Admiral Radford proposed to the French, for example, that the United States help create an "International Volunteer Air Corps" for Indochina. The French in April had suggested an American air strike with the planes painted with French markings. And late in May the French suggested that the President might be able to get around Congress if he sent just a division of marines—some 15,000 men.

But all the arguments in favor of intervention came to naught. The French Cabinet felt that the war-weary National Assembly would balk at any further military action.

And the military situation in the Red River Delta near Hanoi deteriorated so badly in late May and early June that Washington felt intervention would now be useless. On June 15 Secretary Dulles informed Ambassador Bonnet that the time for intervention had run out.

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a legal commentary by a Pentagon offi-

The Geneva 'Disaster'

When the Geneva agreements were concluded on July 21, 1954, the account says, "except for the United States, the major powers were satisfied with their handiwork."

France, Britain, the Soviet Union, Communist China and to some extent North Vietnam believed that they had ended the war and had transferred the conflict to the political realm.

And, the study says, most of the governments involved "anticipated that France would remain in Vietnam." They expected that Paris would retain a major influence over the Diem regime, train Premier Diem's army and insure that the 1956 elections specified by the Geneva accords were carried out.

But the Eisenhower Administration took a different view, the Pentagon account relates.

In meetings Aug. 8 and 12, the National Security Council concluded that the Geneva settlement was a "disaster" that "completed a major forward stride of Communism which may lead to the loss of Southeast Asia."

The Council's thinking appeared consistent with its decision in April before the conference began, that the United States would not associate itself with an unsatisfactory settlement. Secretary Dulles had announced this publicly on several occasions, and in the end the United States had only taken note of the agreements.

The Voices of Dissent

But before the Council reached a final decision in August on exactly what programs to initiate in Indochina, several dissenting voices rose inside the Government.

The national intelligence estimate of Aug. 3 warned that even with American support it was unlikely that the French or Vietnamese would be able to establish a strong government. And the National Intelligence Board predicted that the situation would probably continue to deteriorate.

The Joint Chiefs of Staff had also objected to proposals that the United States train and equip the South Vietnamese Army.

In a memorandum to the Secretary of Defense on Aug. 4, the Joint Chiefs listed their preconditions for U.S. military aid to the Diem regime:

"It is absolutely essential that there be a reasonably strong, stable civil government in control. It is hopeless to expect a U. S. military training mission to achieve success unless the nation concerned is able effectively to perform those governmental functions essential to the successful raising and maintenance of armed forces."

The Joint Chiefs also called for the complete "withdrawal of French forces, French officials and French advisers from Indochina in order to provide no-

tivation and a sound basis for the establishment of national armed forces."

Finally the Joint Chiefs expressed concern about the limits placed on American forces in Vietnam by the Geneva accords--they were restricted to 342 men, the number of American military personnel present in Vietnam when the armistice was signed.

Despite these arguments, the study says, Secretary of State Dulles felt that the need to stop Communism in Vietnam made action imperative.

Dulles's Views Persuasive

In a letter to Secretary of Defense Wilson, he said that while the Diem regime "is far from strong or stable," a military training program would be "one of the most efficient means of enabling the Vietnamese Government to become strong."

In the end, the study recounts, Secretary Dulles's views were persuasive.

On Aug. 20 the President approved a National Security Council paper titled, "Review of U.S. Policy in the Far East." It outlined a threefold program:

• Militarily, the United States would "work with France only so far as necessary to build up indigenous forces able to provide internal security."

• Economically, the United States would begin giving aid directly to the Vietnamese, not as before through the French. The French were to be dissociated from the levers of command.

• Politically, the United States would work with Premier Diem, but would encourage him to broaden his Government and establish more democratic institutions.

With these decisions, the account says "American policy toward post-Geneva Vietnam was drawn." The commitment for the United States to assume the burden of defending South Vietnam had been made.

"The available record does not indicate any rebuttal" to the warnings of the National Intelligence Board or the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the account reports. "What it does indicate is that the U.S. decided to gamble with very limited resources because the potential gains seemed well worth a limited risk."

A Team Already Sent

Although this major decision for direct American involvement in Vietnam was made in August, the Pentagon account shows that the Eisenhower Administration had already sent a team of Americans to begin secret operations against the Vietminh in June, while the Geneva conference was still in session.

The team was headed by Colonel Lansdale, the C.I.A. agent who had established a reputation as America's leading expert in counterguerrilla warfare in the Philippines, where he had helped President Ramon Magsaysay suppress

the Communist-led Hukbalahap insurgents.

So extensive were his subsequent exploits in Vietnam in the nineteen-fifties that Colonel Lansdale was widely known as the model for the leading characters in two novels of Asian intrigue—"The Quiet American," by Graham Greene, and "The Ugly American," by William J. Lederer and Eugene Burdick.

A carefully detailed 21,000-word report by members of Colonel Lansdale's team, the Saigon Military Mission, is appended to the Pentagon chronicle.

According to that report, in the form of a diary from June, 1954, to August, 1955, the team was originally instructed "to undertake paramilitary operations against the enemy and to wage political-psychological warfare."

"Later," it adds, "after Geneva, the mission was modified to prepare the means for undertaking paramilitary operations in Communist areas rather than to wage unconventional warfare."

One of Colonel Lansdale's first worries was to get his team members into Vietnam before the Aug. 11 deadline set by the Geneva agreements for a freeze on the number of foreign military personnel. As the deadline approached, the report says, it appeared that the Saigon Military Mission "might have only two members present unless action was taken."

It adds that Lieut. Gen. John W. O'Daniel, chief of the United States Military Assistance Advisory Group, "agreed to the addition of 10 S.M.M. members under MAAG cover, plus any others in the Defense pipeline who arrived before the deadline. A call for help went out. Ten officers in Korea, Japan and Okinawa were selected and rushed to Vietnam."

While it says that the team members were given cover by being listed as members of MAAG, the report also points out that they communicated with Washington through the C.I.A. station in Saigon.

A Member of the C.I.A.

Colonel Lansdale himself is identified as a member of the C.I.A. in a memorandum on the actions of the President's Special Committee on Indochina, written Jan. 30, 1954, by Maj. Gen. Charles H. Bonesteel 3d. [See text, Eisenhower committee's memo.]

The memorandum, which is appended to the Pentagon study, lists Colonel Lansdale as one of the C.I.A. representatives present at the meeting. Allen W. Dulles, Director of Central Intelligence, also attended the meeting.

In the fall of 1954, after all the members had arrived in Vietnam, the report says, the team's activities increased.

Under Colonel Lansdale, "a small English-language class [was] conducted for mistresses of important personages at their request."

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This class provided valuable contacts for Colonel Lansdale, enabling him to get to know such people as the "favorite mistress" of the army Chief of Staff, Gen. Nguyen Van Hinh, the report recounts.

When the Oct. 9 deadline for the French evacuation of Hanoi approached, the team sought to sabotage some of Hanoi's key facilities.

"It was learned that the largest printing establishment in the north intended to remain in Hanoi and do business with the Vietminh," the report relates. "An attempt was made by S.M.M. to destroy the modern presses, but Vietminh security agents already had moved into the plant and frustrated the attempt."

It was the mission's team in Hanoi that spent several nights pouring contaminant in the engines of the Hanoi bus company so the buses would gradually be wrecked after the Vietminh took over the city.

At the same time, the mission's team carried out what the report calls "black psywar strikes"—that is, psychological warfare with materials falsely attributed to the other side. The team printed what appeared to be "leaflets signed by the Vietminh instructing Tonkinese on how to behave for the Vietminh take-over of the Hanoi region in early October, including items about property, money reform and a three-day holiday of workers upon take-over." The attempt to scare the people worked.

"The day following the distribution of these leaflets," the report adds, "refugee registration [of those wishing to flee North Vietnam] tripled. Two days later Vietminh currency was worth half the value prior to the leaflets."

"The Vietminh took to the radio to denounce the leaflets; the leaflets were so authentic in appearance that even most of the rank-and-file Vietminh were sure that the radio denunciations were a French trick."

Some Help From the Stars

In the South, the team hired Vietnamese astrologers—in whose art many Asians place great trust—to compile almanacs bearing dire predictions for the Vietminh and good omens for the new Government of Premier Diem.

To carry out clandestine operations in North Vietnam after the team evacuated Hanoi, the report adds, Maj. Lucien Conein, an officer of S.M.M., recruited a group of Vietnamese agents under the code name of Binh.

"The group was to be trained and supported by the U.S. as patriotic Vietnamese," the report says, "to come eventually under Government control when the Government was ready for such activities. Thirteen Binh were quietly exfiltrated through the port of Haiphong . . . and taken on the first stage of the journey to their training area by a U.S. Navy ship."

Until Haiphong was finally evacuated in May, 1955, Civil Air Transport, the Taiwan-based airline run by Gen. Claire Chennault, smuggled arms for the Binh team from Saigon to Haiphong.

In exchange, the report says, the Lansdale mission got C.I.A.-funded private contract for flying the thousands of refugees out of North Vietnam.

As the report describes the team's actions, "Haiphong was reminiscent of our own pioneer days as it was swamped with people whom it couldn't shelter. Living space and food were at a premium, nervous tension grew. It was a wild time for our northern team."

Another team of 21 agents, code-named the Hao group, were recruited in Saigon, smuggled out on a U.S. Navy ship while disguised as coolies, and taken to a "secret site" for training, the report goes on.

Arms for the Haos were smuggled into Saigon by the United States Air Force, the report says, adding that S.M.M. brought in eight and a half tons of equipment. This included 14 radios, 300 carbines, 50 pistols, 300 pounds of explosives and 100,000 rounds of ammunition.

Nanuccified to a Leper

The Lansdale team's report does not tell what kinds of intelligence or sabotage activities the Binh and Hao groups carried out in North Vietnam. But it does recount that one Binh agent was mistakenly picked up by Premier Diem's troops on his return to South Vietnam.

"He was interrogated by being handcuffed to a leper, both beaten with the same stick to draw blood, told he would now have leprosy, and both locked up in a tiny cell together," it says "S.M.M. was able to have him released."

For fiscal year 1955, the report shows, expenses for the Saigon Military Mission ran to \$228,000. This did not include salary for the American officers or costs of weapons drawn from American stocks.

The largest item, \$123,980, was listed as payment for operations, including pay and expenses for agents, safehouses and transportation.

Highlights of the Period

South Vietnam, the secret Pentagon account contends, is essentially the creation of the United States, and the formative years were those of the Truman and—in particular—the Eisenhower Administrations.

Here, in chronological order, are key events—actions, decisions, policy formulations—of this period.

1945-6

Ho Chi Minh writes series of appeals for U.S. support to President Truman, Secretary of State; no indication, account says, of any reply.

1950

U.S. recognizes Bao Dai regime, not Ho; French ask military aid; Secretary of State Dean Acheson says alternative is "extension of Communism" throughout Southeast Asia "and possibly westward." Aid decision, account says, meant U.S. was "thereafter" directly involved "in the developing tragedy in Vietnam."

1954

National Security Council urges President Eisenhower to warn that "French acquiescence" in negotiated settlement would end U.S. aid to France. Suggests U.S. might continue war to "military victory."

French ask U.S. air strike with disguised planes. President's nonintervention decision still tentative. Secretary of State John Foster Dulles says he will give "broad hint" to French that U.S. intervention is possible with preconditions. Eisenhower orders draft Congressional resolution Defense Department prepares memo on required U.S. forces.

Joint Chiefs of Staff memo says Indochina is "devoid of decisive military objectives."

June—Col. Edward G. Lansdale of C.I.A. arrives Saigon to head team of agents for "paramilitary operations" and "political-psychological warfare" against North.

August—National intelligence estimate terms chances for strong regime in South Vietnam. National Security Council finds Geneva accords "disaster" completing "major forward stride of Communism," study says. Joint Chiefs' memo says "strong, stable civil government" is needed.

ment" is "absolutely essential" basis for U.S. military-training aid. But Mr. Dulles feels military-training program is "one of the most efficient means" of stabilizing regime. With President's approval of Council recommendations for direct economic, military aid to South Vietnam, "American policy toward post-Geneva Vietnam was drawn," account says.

October—Lansdale team in "delayed sabotage" of Hanoi railroad; contaminates oil supply for city's buses for "gradual wreckage" of motors, distributes fake Vietminh leaflets; recruits, trains, equips two teams Vietnamese agents.

December—Gen. J. Lawton Collins, U.S. special representative, urges removal and replacement of Ngo Dinh Diem as leader or "re-evaluation of our plans" for area aid. Mr. Dulles replies he has "no other choice but to continue our aid to Vietnam and support of Diem."

1955

April—Mr. Dulles, after meeting with General Collins, cables embassy in Saigon to seek Diem alternative.

May—Mr. Diem, with Lansdale aid, quashes sect uprising, Saigon. Mr. Dulles cancels cable. National Security Council draft statement—its "main features" conveyed to Mr. Diem—suggests he insist on free elections by secret ballot with strict supervision. Communists in Germany had rejected those conditions; "hopefully the Vietminh would follow suit," account says.

December—Mr. Dulles, in cable to embassy, says U.S. should not act "to speed up present process of decay of Geneva accords" but not make "slightest effort to infuse life into them."

1956

U.S. sends 350 additional military men to Saigon; account says this "example of the U.S. ignoring" Geneva accords.

1960

National intelligence estimate predicts "disification and disarray" with the Government will probably continue to rise" and these "adverse trends," unchecked, "will almost certainly in time cause the collapse of Diem's regime."

continued

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"Since undoubtedly true that elections might eventually mean unification Vietnam under Ho Chi Minh, this makes it all more important they should be only held as long after cease-fire agreement as possible and in conditions free from intimidation to give democratic elements best chance."

Following similar reasoning the National Security Council in May, 1955, shortly before consultations on the elections were supposed to begin, produced a draft statement, "U.S. Policy on All-Vietnam Elections."

According to the Pentagon study, it "held that to give no impression of blocking elections while avoiding the possibility of losing them, Diem should insist on free elections by secret ballot with strict supervision. Communists in Korea and Germany had rejected these conditions; hopefully the Vietminh would follow suit."

But on June 9, the account says, the Council "decided to shelve the draft statement. Its main features had already been conveyed to Diem."

Secretary Dulles's ambivalent attitude toward the Geneva accords is also reflected in a cablegram he sent to the United States Embassy in Saigon on Dec. 11, 1955, outlining Washington's position toward the International Control Commission.

Neither Help Nor Hindrance

"While we should certainly take no positive step to speed up present process of decay of Geneva accords," it said, "neither should we make the slightest effort to infuse life into them."

In May, 1956, in what the Pentagon account says is an "example of the U.S. ignoring" the Geneva accords, 350 additional military men were sent to Saigon under the pretext of helping the Vietnamese recover and redistribute equipment abandoned by the French.

This was "a thinly veiled device to increase the number of Americans in Vietnam," the Pentagon account says.

These men, who were officially designated the Temporary Equipment Recovery Mission or TERM, stayed on as a permanent part of the Military Assistance Advisory Group, the narrative says, to help in intelligence and administrative work.

Washington dispatched the TERM group, the Pentagon study discloses, "when it was learned informally that the Indian Government would instruct its representative on the I.C.C. to interpose no objection."

The I.C.C. is composed of representatives from Poland, India and Canada, with the Indian usually considered the neutral representative.

After the crisis with the secess in the spring of 1955 and the uneventful passing of the date for elections in 1956, American officials were hopeful that President Diem had succeeded.

"It seemed for a while that the gamble against long odds had succeeded," the Pentagon account says. "The Vietminh were quiescent; the Republic of Vietnam armed forces were

markedly better armed and trained than they were when the U.S. effort began; and President Diem showed a remarkable ability to put down factions threatening the GVN [Government of Vietnam] and to maintain himself in office."

The American aid effort, the study reports, was focused almost entirely on security. Eight out of every 10 dollars went to security, and much of what was intended for agriculture, education, or transportation actually went to security-directed programs.

For example, the account says, a 20-mile stretch of highway, built between Saigon and Bienhoa at the insistence of the MAAG commander, Gen. Samuel T. Williams, received more aid money than all the funds provided for labor, community development, social welfare, health and education from 1954 to 1961.

But despite American hopes and the aid effort, the insurgency in the countryside began to pick up again in 1957 and particularly in 1959. The number of terrorist murders and kidnappings of local officials rose dramatically, and enemy units began to attack in ever-increasing size.

As the insurgency grew, the small American intelligence network "correctly and consistently estimated" the nature of the opposition to President Diem and his own weaknesses, the Pentagon study says. The American intelligence estimates "were remarkably sound," it adds.

A special national intelligence estimate in August, 1960, for example, said that:

"In the absence of more effective Government measures to protect the peasants and to win their positive cooperation, the prospect is for expansion of the areas of Vietcong control in the countryside, particularly in the southwestern provinces.

"Dissatisfaction and discontent with the Government will probably continue to rise."

"These adverse trends are not irreversible, but if they remain unchecked, they will almost certainly in time cause the collapse of Diem's regime."

However, the study relates, "the national intelligence estimates re Diem do not appear to have restrained the N.S.C. in its major reviews of U.S. policy" toward Vietnam.

The basic Eisenhower Administration policy papers on Southeast Asia in 1956, 1958 and 1960 repeated American objectives in "virtually identical" language, the Pentagon account reports.

Among the Goals of Policy

According to the 1956 paper by the National Security Council, these were among the goals of American policy toward Vietnam:

"Assist Free Vietnam to develop a strong, stable and constitutional government to enable Free Vietnam to assert an increasingly attractive contrast to conditions in the present Communist zone."

"Work toward the weakening of the Communists in North and South Vietnam in order to bring about the eventual peaceful reunification of a free and independent Vietnam under anti-Communist leadership."

"Support the position of the Government of Free Vietnam that all-Vietnam elections may take place only after it is satisfied that genuinely free elections can be held throughout both zones of Vietnam."

During the late nineteen-fifties, the study relates, United States officials in Saigon were also optimistic in their public comments about the situation, despite the pessimistic secret reports they forwarded to Washington.

"While classified policy paper thus dealt with risks," the account says, "public statements of U.S. officials did not refer to the jeopardy. To the contrary, the picture presented the public and Congress by Ambassador Durbrow, General Williams and other Administration spokesmen was of continuing progress, virtually miraculous improvement, year in and year out."

Ambassador Elbridge Durbrow and General Williams for example, told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in the summer of 1959 that Vietnam's internal security was "in no serious danger" and that South Vietnam was in a better position than ever before to cope with an invasion from the North.

A Progress Report

The next spring General Williams wrote to Senator Mike Mansfield that President Diem was doing so well that the United States could begin a "phased withdrawal" of American advisers in 1961.

That was the situation that confronted President Kennedy when he took office early in 1961.

"The U.S. had gradually developed a special commitment in South Vietnam," writes the Pentagon analyst charged with explaining the problems facing President Kennedy. "It was certainly not absolutely binding—but the commitment was there . . ."

"Without U.S. support," the analyst says, "Diem almost certainly could not have consolidated his hold on the South during 1955 and 1956."

"Without the threat of U.S. intervention, South Vietnam could not have refused to even discuss the elections called for in 1956 under the Geneva settlement without being immediately overrun by the Vietminh armies."

"Without U.S. aid in the years following, the Diem regime certainly, and an independent South Vietnam almost as certainly, could not have survived . . ."

In brief, the analyst concludes, "South Vietnam was essentially the creation of the United States."

An analysis of the Pentagon study, by Max Frankel, the Washington correspondent of The New York Times, will appear tomorrow.

continued

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Texts of 'Final Declaration' at Geneva Conference

And U.S. Statement Renouncing Use of Force

Following are the texts of the "final declaration" endorsed orally by France, the Vietminh, Britain, China, the Soviet Union, Laos and Cambodia at the end of the Geneva conference in July, 1954, and of the statement of United States policy delivered at the concluding session by Under Secretary of State Walter Bedell Smith. The "final declaration," along with the armistice agreement signed by France and the Vietminh, constitutes the Geneva accords on Vietnam.

The 'Final Declaration'

FINAL DECLARATION, dated the 21st July, 1954, of the Geneva Conference on the problem of restoring peace in Indo-China, in which the representatives of Cambodia, the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam, France, Laos, the People's Republic of China, the State of Viet-Nam, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America took part.

1. The Conference takes note of the agreements ending hostilities in Cambodia, Laos and Viet-Nam and organizing international control and the supervision of the execution of the provisions of these agreements.

2. The Conference expresses satisfaction at the ending of hostilities in Cambodia, Laos and Viet-Nam; the Conference expresses its conviction that the execution of the provisions set out in the present declaration and in the agreements on the cessation of hostilities will permit Cambodia, Laos, and Viet-Nam henceforth to play their part, in full independence and sovereignty, in the peaceful community of nations.

3. The Conference takes note of the declarations made by the Governments of Cambodia and of Laos of their intention to adopt measures permitting all citizens to take their place in the national community, in particular by participating in the next general elections, which, in conformity with the constitution of each of these countries, shall take place in the course of the year 1955, by secret ballot and in conditions of respect for fundamental freedoms.

4. The Conference takes note of the clauses in the agreement on the cessation of hostilities in Viet-Nam prohibiting the introduction into Viet-Nam of foreign troops and military personnel as well as of all kinds of arms and munitions. The Conference also takes note of the declarations made by the Governments of Cambodia and Laos of their resolution not to request foreign aid, whether in war material, in personnel or in instructors except for the purpose of the effective defense of their territory and, in the case of Laos, to the extent defined by the agreement on the cessation of hostilities in Laos.

5. The Conference takes note of the clauses in the agreement on the cessation of hostilities in Viet-Nam to the effect that no military base under the control of a foreign State may be established in the regrouping zones of the two parties, the latter having the obligation to see that the zones allotted to them shall not constitute part of any military alliance and shall not be utilized for the resumption of hostilities or in the service of an aggressive policy. The Conference also takes note of the declarations of the Governments of Cambodia and Laos to the effect that they will not join in any agreement with other States if this agreement includes the obligation to participate in a military alliance not in conformity with the principles of the Charter of the United Nations or, in the case of Laos, with the principles of the agreement on the cessation of hostilities in Laos or, so long as their security is not threatened, the obligation not to establish bases on Cambodia or Laotian territory for the military forces of foreign powers.

6. The Conference recognizes that the essential purpose of the agreement relating to Viet-Nam is to settle military questions with a view to ending hostilities and that the military demarcation line is provisional and should not in any way be interpreted as constituting a political or territorial boundary. The Conference expresses its conviction that the execution of the provisions set out in the present declaration and in the agreement on the cessation of hostilities creates the necessary basis for the achievement in the near future of a political settlement in Viet-Nam.

7. The Conference declares that, so far as Viet-Nam is concerned, the settlement of political problems, effected on the basis of respect for the principles of independence, unity and territorial integrity, shall permit the Viet-Namese people to enjoy the fundamental freedoms, guaranteed by democratic institutions established as a result of free general elections by secret ballot. In order to ensure that sufficient progress in the restoration of peace has been made, and that all the necessary conditions obtain for free expression of the national will, general elections shall be held in July 1956, under the supervision of an international commission composed of representatives of the Member States of the International Supervisory Commission, referred to in the agreement on the cessation of hostilities. Consultations will be held on this subject between the competent representative authorities of the two zones from 20 July 1955 onwards.

8. The provisions of the agreements on the cessation of hostilities intended to ensure the protection of individuals applied and must, in particular, allow everyone in Viet-Nam to decide freely in which zone he wishes to live.

9. The competent representative authorities of the Northern and Southern zones of Viet-Nam, as well as the authorities of Laos and Cambodia, must not permit any individual or collective reprisals against persons who have collaborated, in any way with one of the parties during the war, or against members of such persons' families.

10. The Conference takes note of the declaration of the Government of the French Republic to the effect that it is ready to withdraw its troops from the territory of Cambodia, Laos, and Viet-Nam, at the requests of the Governments concerned and within periods which shall be fixed by agreement between the parties except in the cases where, by agreement between the two parties, a certain number of French troops shall remain at specified points and for a specified time.

11. The Conference takes note of the declaration of the French Government to the effect that for the settlement of all the problems connected with the re-establishment and consolidation of peace in Cambodia, Laos and Viet-Nam, the French Government will proceed from the principle of respect for the independence and sovereignty, unity, and territorial integrity of Cambodia, Laos and Viet-Nam.

12. In their relations with Cambodia, Laos and Viet-Nam, each member of the Geneva Conference undertakes to respect the sovereignty, the independence, the unity and the territorial integrity of the above-mentioned states, and to refrain from any interference in their internal affairs.

13. The members of the Conference agree to consult one another on any question which may be referred to them by the International Supervisory Commission, in order to study such measures as may prove necessary to ensure that the agreements on the cessation of hostilities in Cambodia, Laos and Viet-Nam are respected.

The American Statement

As I stated on July 18, my Government is not prepared to join in a declaration by the Conference such as is submitted. However, the United States makes this unilateral declaration of its position in these matters:

"The Government of the United States being resolved to devote its efforts to the strengthening of peace in accordance with the principles and purposes of the United Nations takes note of the agreements concluded at Geneva on July 20 and 21, 1954 between (a) The Franco-Laotian Command and the Command of the Peoples Army of Viet-Nam; (b) the Command of the Peoples Army of Viet-

Nam; (c) Franco-Vietnamese Command and the Command of the Peoples Army of Viet-Nam and of paragraphs 1 to 12 inclusive of the declaration presented to the Geneva Conference on July 21, 1954 declares with regard to the aforesaid agreements and paragraphs that (i) it will refrain from the threat or the use of force to disturb them, in accordance with Article 2 (4) of the Charter of the United Nations dealing with the obligation of members to refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force; and (ii) it would view any renewal of the aggression in violation of the aforesaid agreements with grave concern and as seriously threatening international peace and security.

"In connection with the statement in the declaration concerning free elections in Viet-Nam my Government wishes to make clear its position which it has expressed in a declaration made in Washington on June 29, 1954, as follows:

"In the case of nations now divided against their will, we shall continue to seek to achieve unity through free elections supervised by the United Nations to insure that they are conducted fairly."

"With respect to the statement made by the representative of the State of Viet-Nam, the United States reiterates its traditional position that peoples are entitled to determine their own future and that it will not join in an arrangement which would hinder this. Nothing in its declaration just made is intended to or does indicate any departure from this traditional position.

"We share the hope that the agreements will permit Cambodia, Laos and Viet-Nam to play their part, in full independence and sovereignty, in the peaceful community of nations, and will enable the peoples of that area to determine their own future."